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TM

STAR FORCE





ATARI FORCE



CREATED AND WRITTEN BY:
GERRY CONWAY & ROY THOMAS
VISUAL CONCEPTS AND ART:
ROSS ANDRU
DICK GIORDANO
MIKE DECARLO
DESIGN:
NEAL POZNER
LETTERING:
JOHN COSTANZA
COLORING:
ADRIENNE ROY
SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC EFFECTS:
JACK RYNIEC
GEORGE KERRIGAN
EDITOR:
DICK GIORDANO

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THE YEAR:
2005 AD.

THE PLACE: THE NORTH CAL
HEADQUARTERS OF THE ATARI
TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
IN THAT PART OF THE NORTH AMERICAN
CONTINENT THAT USED TO BE KNOWN AS
CALIFORNIA BEFORE THE "BREAK-UP..."

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRUDER ALERT!

THE SITUATION:
A WORLD IN CRISIS...

SURE, AND THIS
LITTLE BUGGY'S
RADAR SHIELD
HAS DONE ITS
JOB WELL!

IT'S WITHIN
SHOUTING DISTANCE
OF YON FINE BUILDING THAT
I AM, BUT NOT A PEEP
HAVE I HEARD FROM
THEIR SECURITY SCREENS!

I'LL BE
TAKING THEM
UNAWARES,
I THINK--

--AND AFTER
ALL, WASN'T THAT
THE PLAN?



"...AND THE POOR DARLINGS DON'T EVEN KNOW THEY'RE BEING WATCHED."

DON'T THINK I'LL EVER GET USED TO THE SOUND OF THAT FORCE FIELD.

BLASTED THING MAKES MY TEETH ACHE.

ULTRA-FREQUENCY SONICS... THEY'RE A KILLER, ALL RIGHT.

YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN THE GUARD-DOGS, THE NIGHT WE FIRST TURNED IT ON.

THE DOGS COULDN'T STAND IT-- THEY STARTED HOWLING AS SOON AS THE FIELD WENT UP, AND DIDN'T STOP TILL WE SHUT IT DOWN NEXT MORNING.

NOW WE WALK PATROL WITHOUT THE DOGS... AND I MISS 'EM.

CHECKPOINT DELTA REPORTING TO BASE SECURITY...

... ALL CLEAR
AT THE
PERIMETER.

IT'S A NICE NIGHT, TOO
BAD YOU FOLKS DOWN
IN THE PIT CAN'T JOIN US.

LET'S LEAVE THE
SLANG BACK IN THE
DORMS, DELTA
CHECKPOINT.

WE DON'T CALL IT
"THE PIT"-- PROPER
TERMINOLOGY IS SECURITY
BASE STATION, SUB-
LEVEL SEVEN!

BUT THANKS
FOR THE
THOUGHT.

ROGER,
BASE SECURITY,
CHECKPOINT DELTA,
SIGNING OUT.

IT IS A
BEAUTIFUL
NIGHT UP
THERE,
CAPTAIN.

I ALMOST
WISH...

SO DO
WE ALL,
SON.

BUT THE WAR
LEFT THINGS PRETTY
UNSETTLED,
OUTSIDE.

WE HAVE
TO BE ON
GUARD
CONSTANTLY.

LET'S
HOPE THOSE
MEN
REMEMBER
THAT...

"BECAUSE, IF
THEY SLACK
OFF..."

"--IT
COULD
MEAN
DISASTER!"

WHAT
THE--?

LESSON ONE IN
GUERRILLA WARFARE
TACTICS: GRAB THE
INITIATIVE AND
KEEP IT--

--BECAUSE,
IF YOU LET IT SLIP...





IN "THE PIT" (OR, IF YOU PREFER,
SECURITY BASE STATION, SUB-
LEVEL SEVEN)...

BEEP BEEP

CAPTAIN--
WE'VE GOT A
FIELD BREAK
AT CHECKPOINT
DELTA!

NO, NO, THAT'S
FUNNY.

PROBABLY JUST A
MOMENTARY POWER
SURGE.

SENSORS SHOW
THE BREAK
CLOSED BY
ITSELF.

KEEP AN EYE OPEN
TO SEE IF IT
REPEATS

NO ALARMS...
NO EXTRA GUARDS
ON THE PROWL...

I'D CALL IT THE
LUCK OF THE IRISH--
BUT I'M NOT A
WOMAN TO BELIEVE
IN LUCK!

NOW IT'S TIME
TO BE TAKING THE
NEXT STEP.

FOR WEEKS, THERE'VE
BEEN RUMORS OF A
TOP SECRET OPERATION
CALLED PROJECT MULTIVERSE
A'WORKING DOWN IN
SUB-LEVEL SEVENTEEN.

THAT'S
WHERE I'LL
BE HEADING...

... AND PITY
ANYONE WHO TRIES
TO STOP ME!



AND, AS THE MYSTERIOUS BLACK-GARBED FIGURE WITH THE LILTING GAELEC ACCENT MAKES HER WAY FURTHER INTO THE ATARI HEADQUARTERS COMPOUND, WE MUST TURN OUR ATTENTION TO A NEW SCENE, 90,000 KILOMETERS STRAIGHT UP...

THIS PLACE: ATARI SOLAR SATELITE STATION ONE, DESIGNED TO BRING THE SUN'S ENERGY TO A FUEL-STARVED WORLD.

EASY WITH THAT ELECTRIC TORCH, LANSKY.

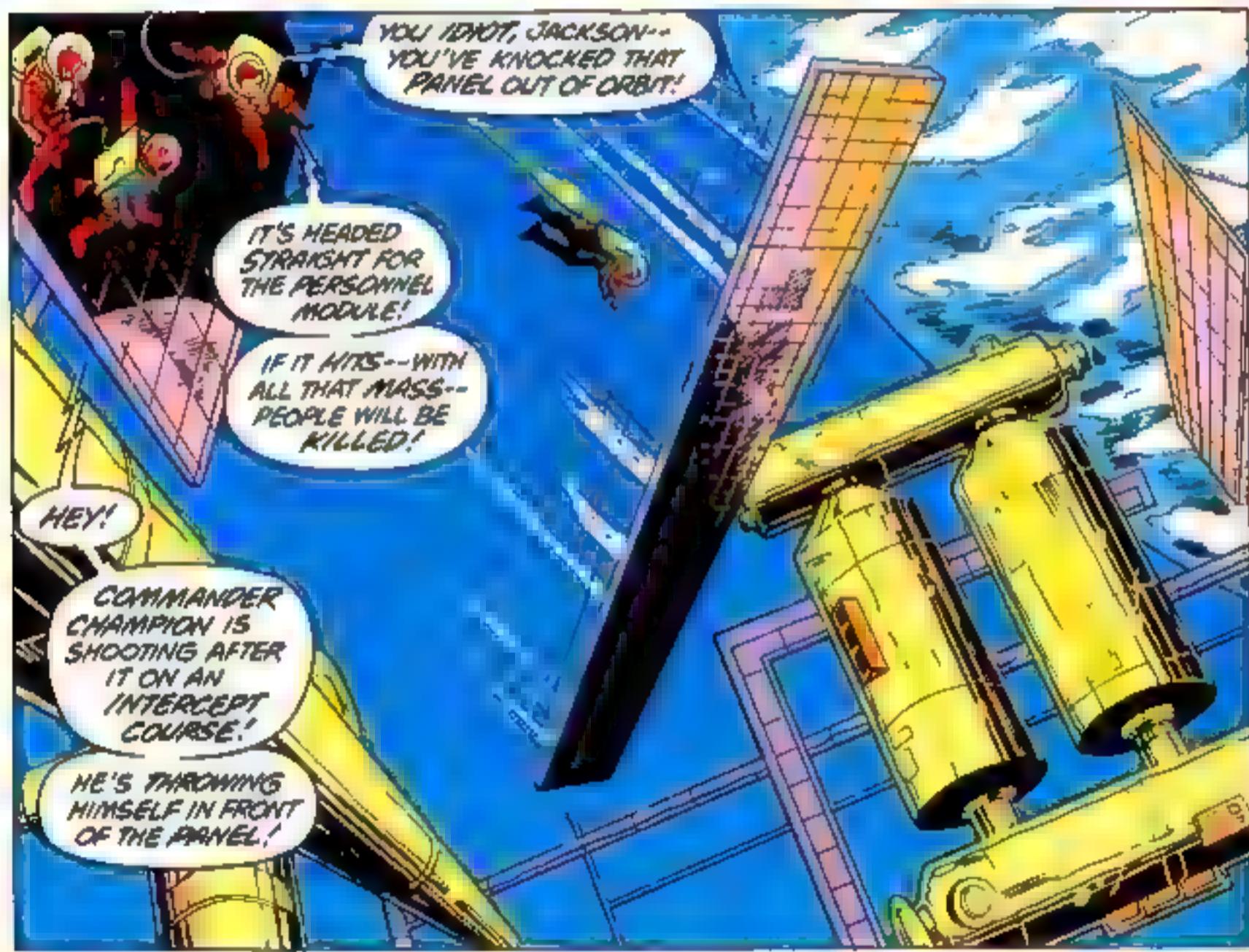
WE'RE TRYING TO WELD THESE PANELS TOGETHER--NOT MELT THEM TO SLAG!

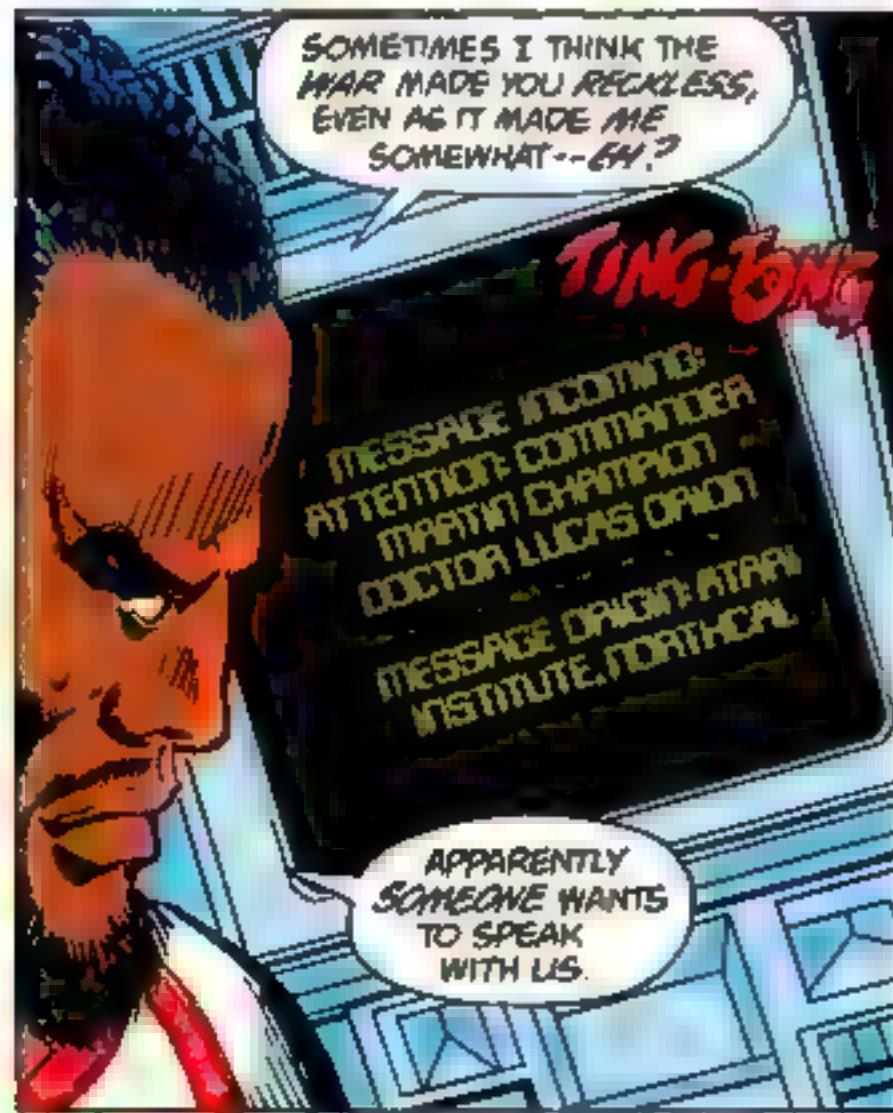
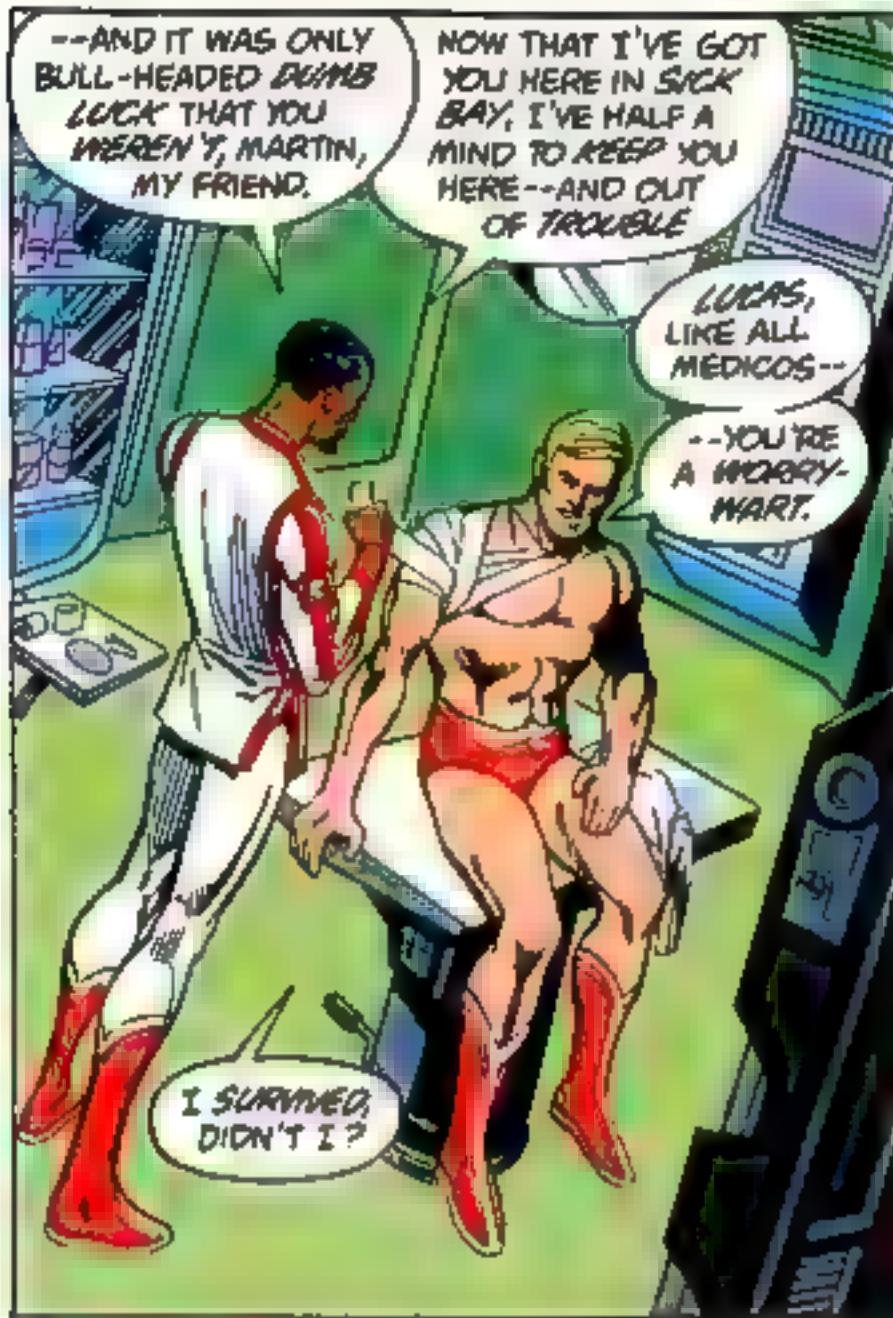
THE MAN: MARTIN
CHAMPION, COMMANDER
OF STATION ONE AND
CHIEF TROUBLESHOOTER
FOR ATARI INSTITUTE...

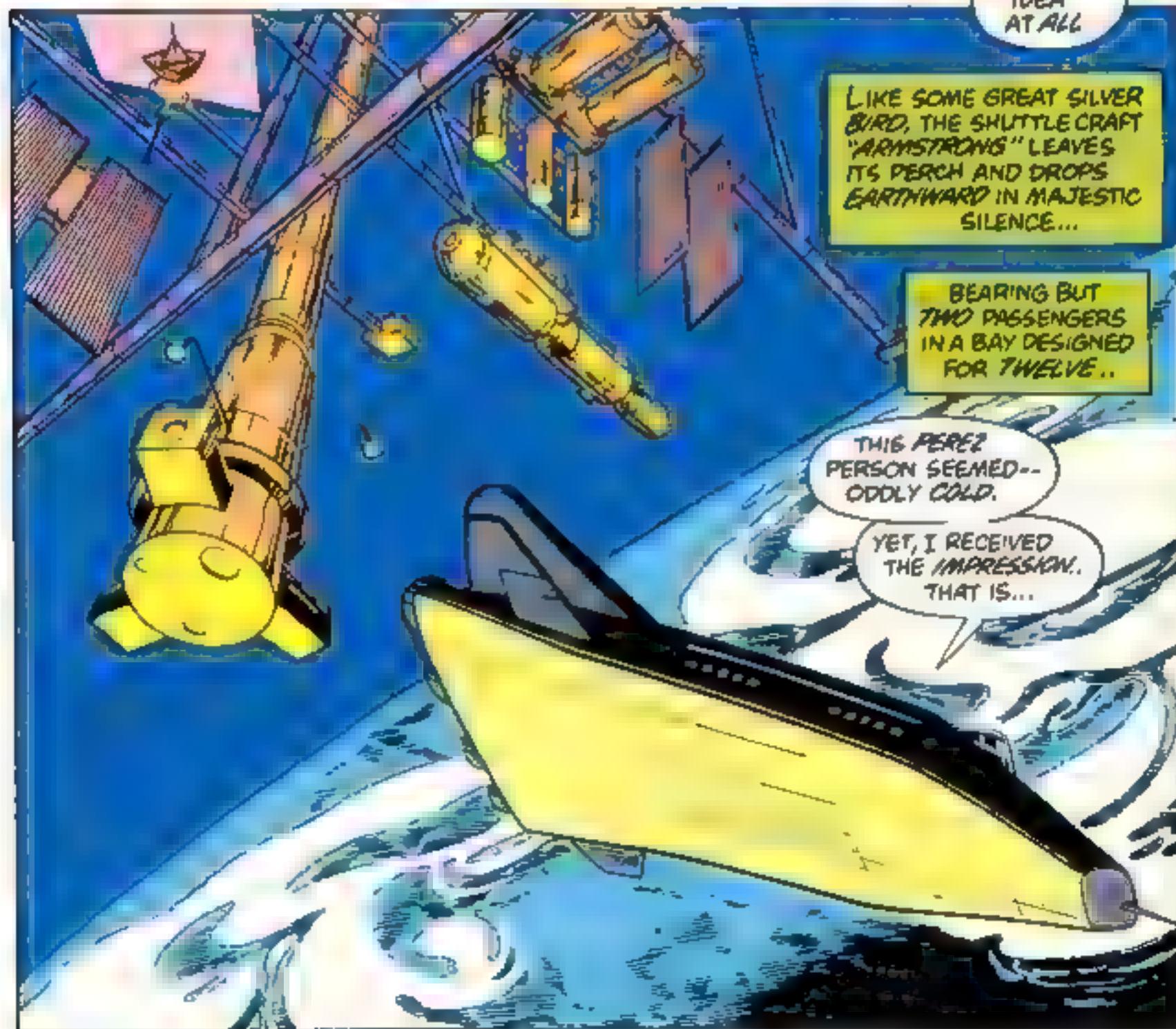
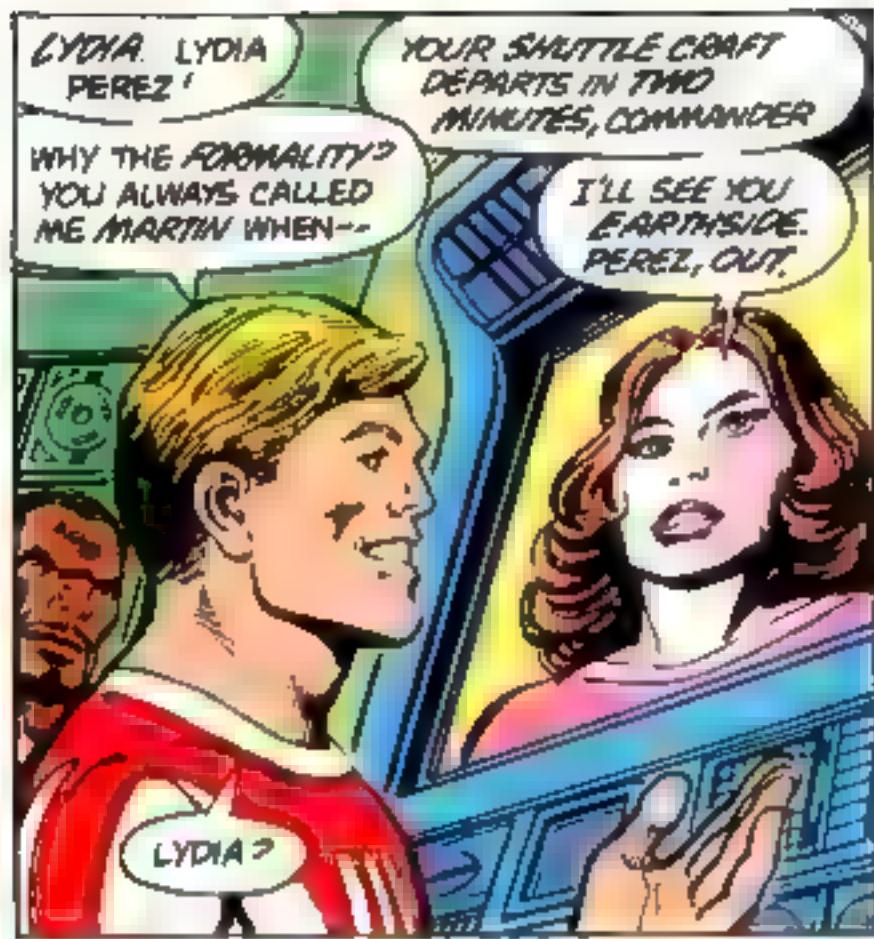
SURE THING,
COMMANDER.

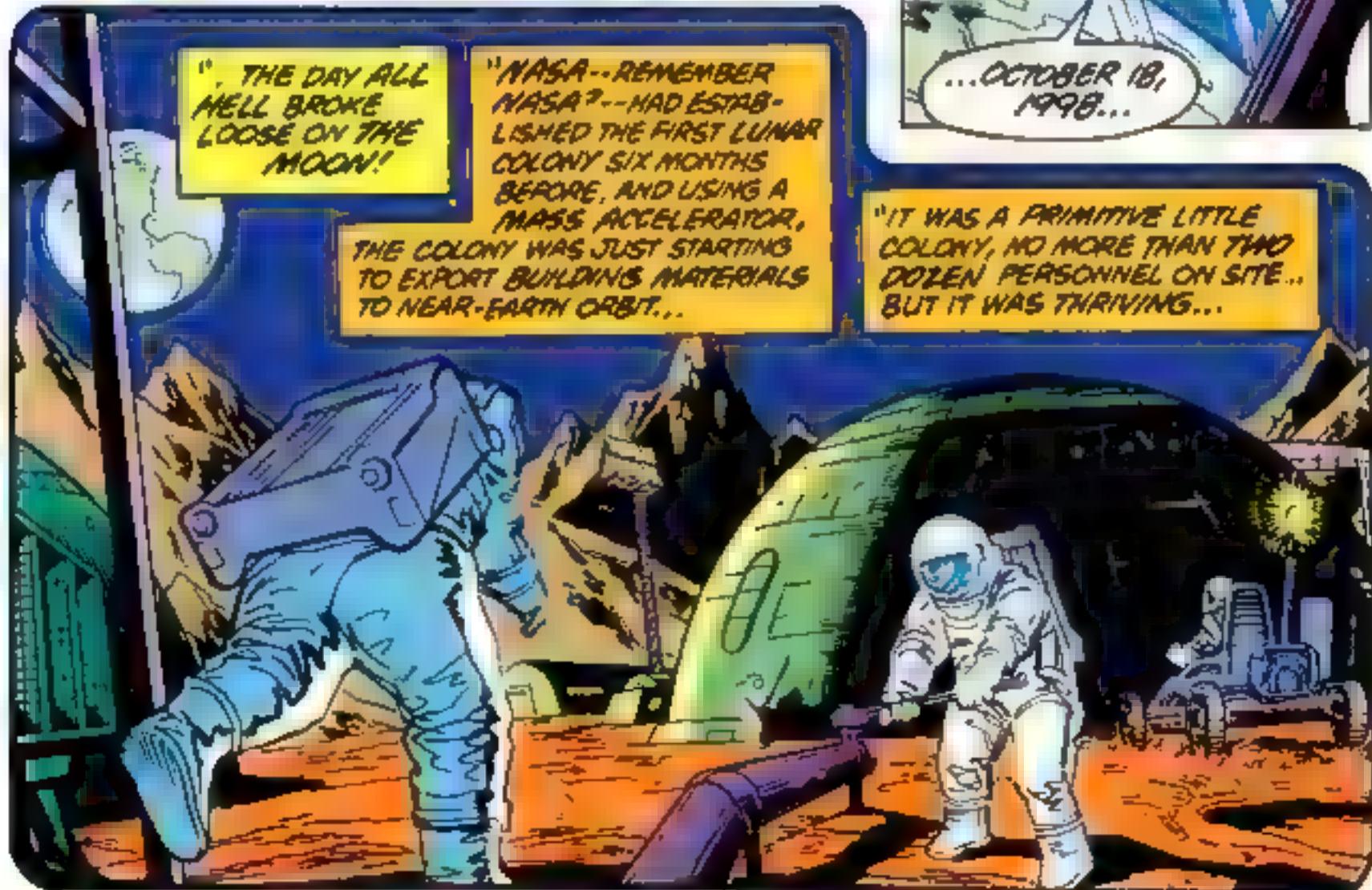
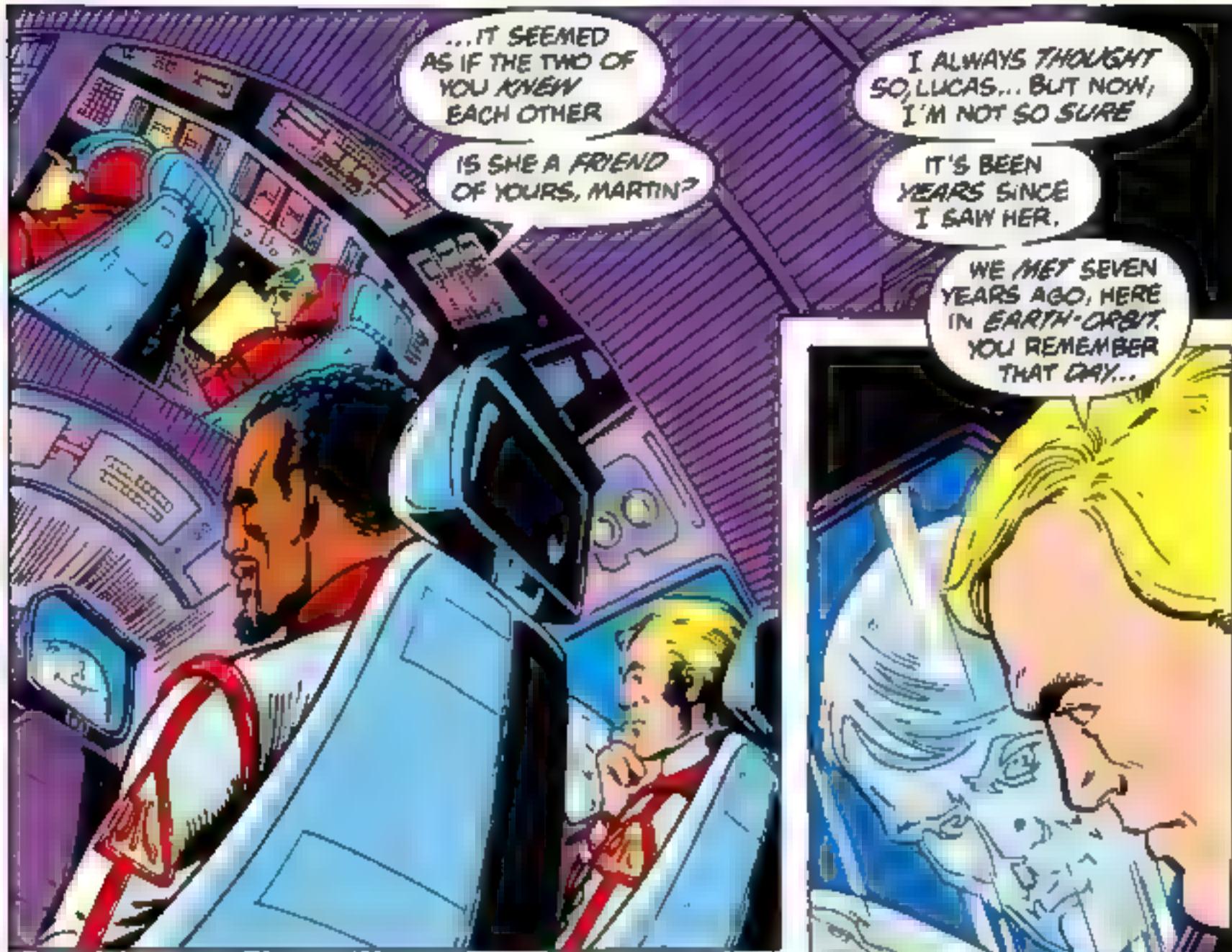
GUESS I'M
STILL NOT USED
TO WEIGHTLESS
CONSTRUCTION
WORK.

REBUILDING
THE GOLDEN
GATE WAS A
WHOLE LOT
SIMPLER
THAN THIS!





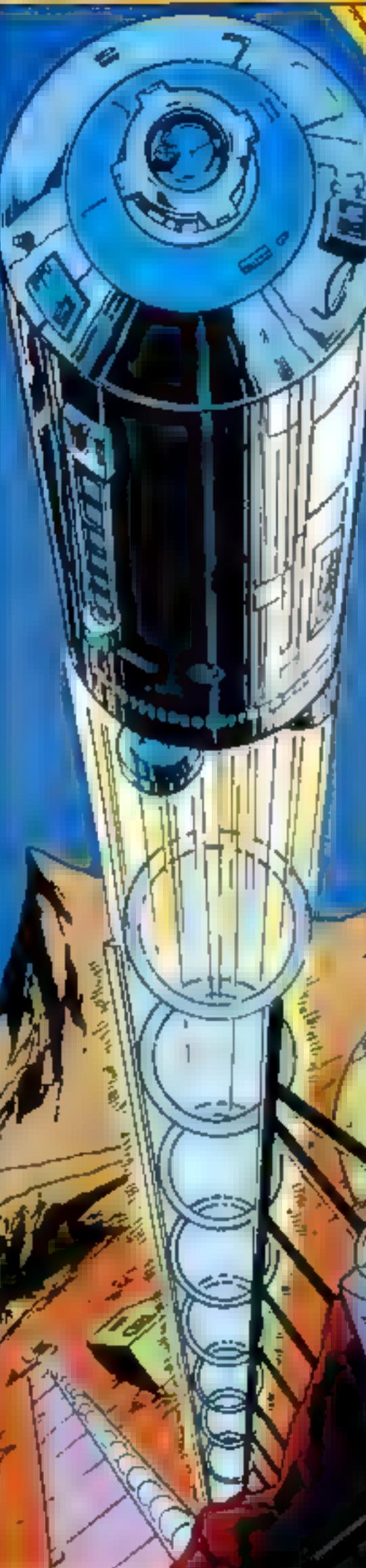




"...AND SOMEONE AMONG
OUR ENEMIES DECIDED IT
WAS THRIVING TOO WELL...."

CHAPTER TWO:

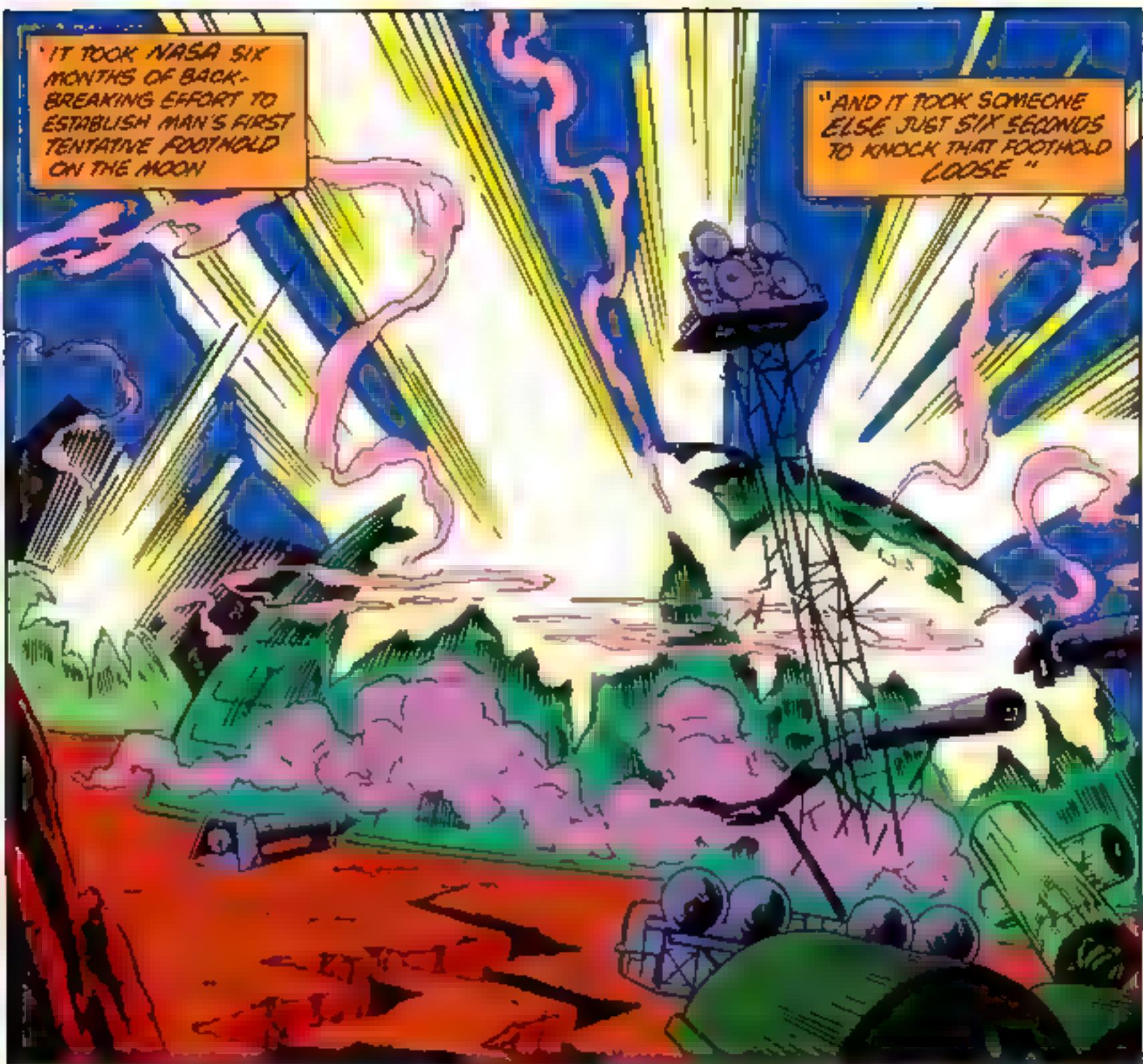
DEADLY ORBIT



GOOD,
LORD!
THAT METEOR
--IT'S GOING
TO--

"IT TOOK NASA SIX MONTHS OF BACK-BREAKING EFFORT TO ESTABLISH MAN'S FIRST TENTATIVE FOOTHOLD ON THE MOON"

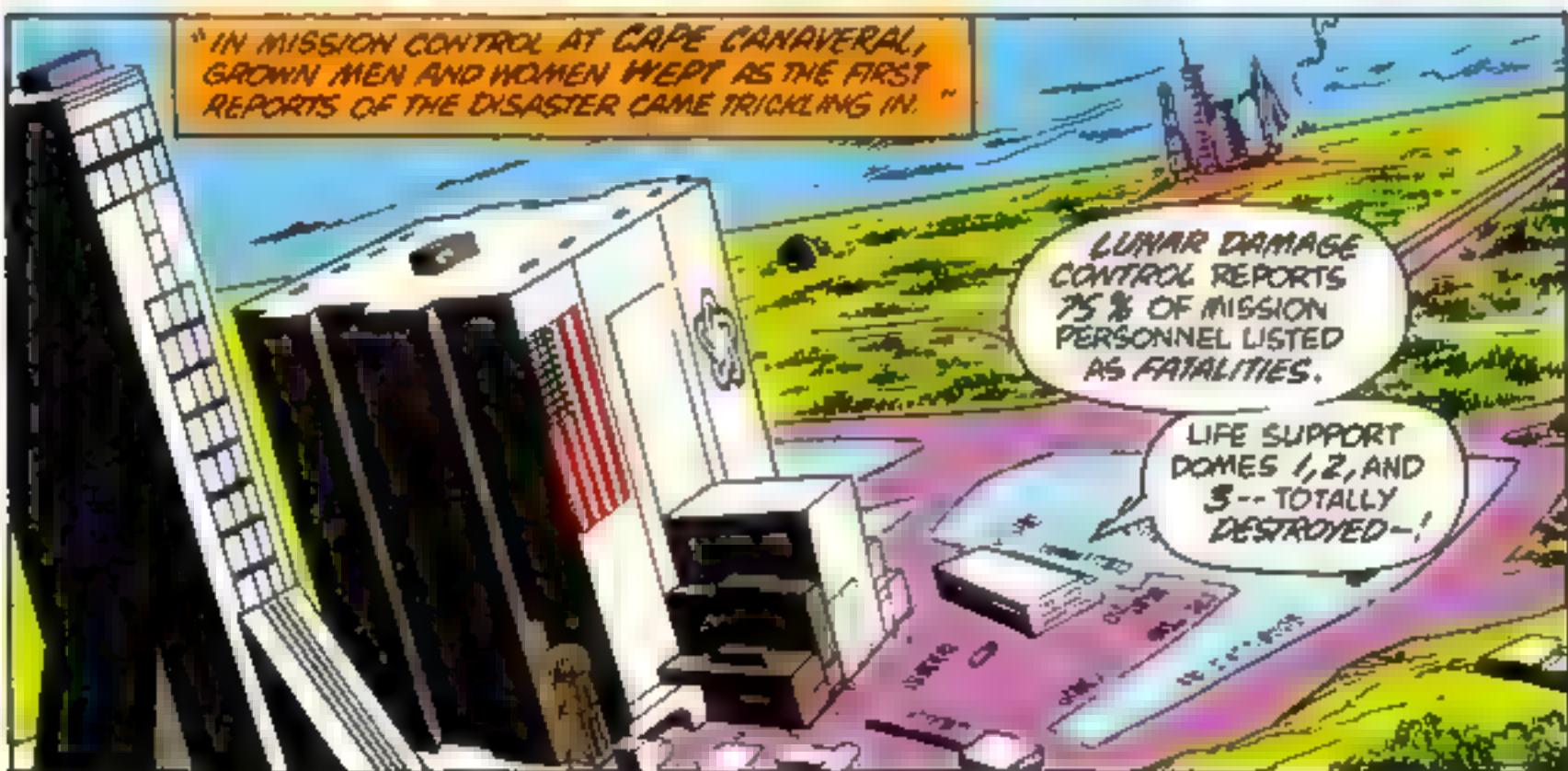
"AND IT TOOK SOMEONE ELSE JUST SIX SECONDS TO KNOCK THAT FOOTHOLD LOOSE!"

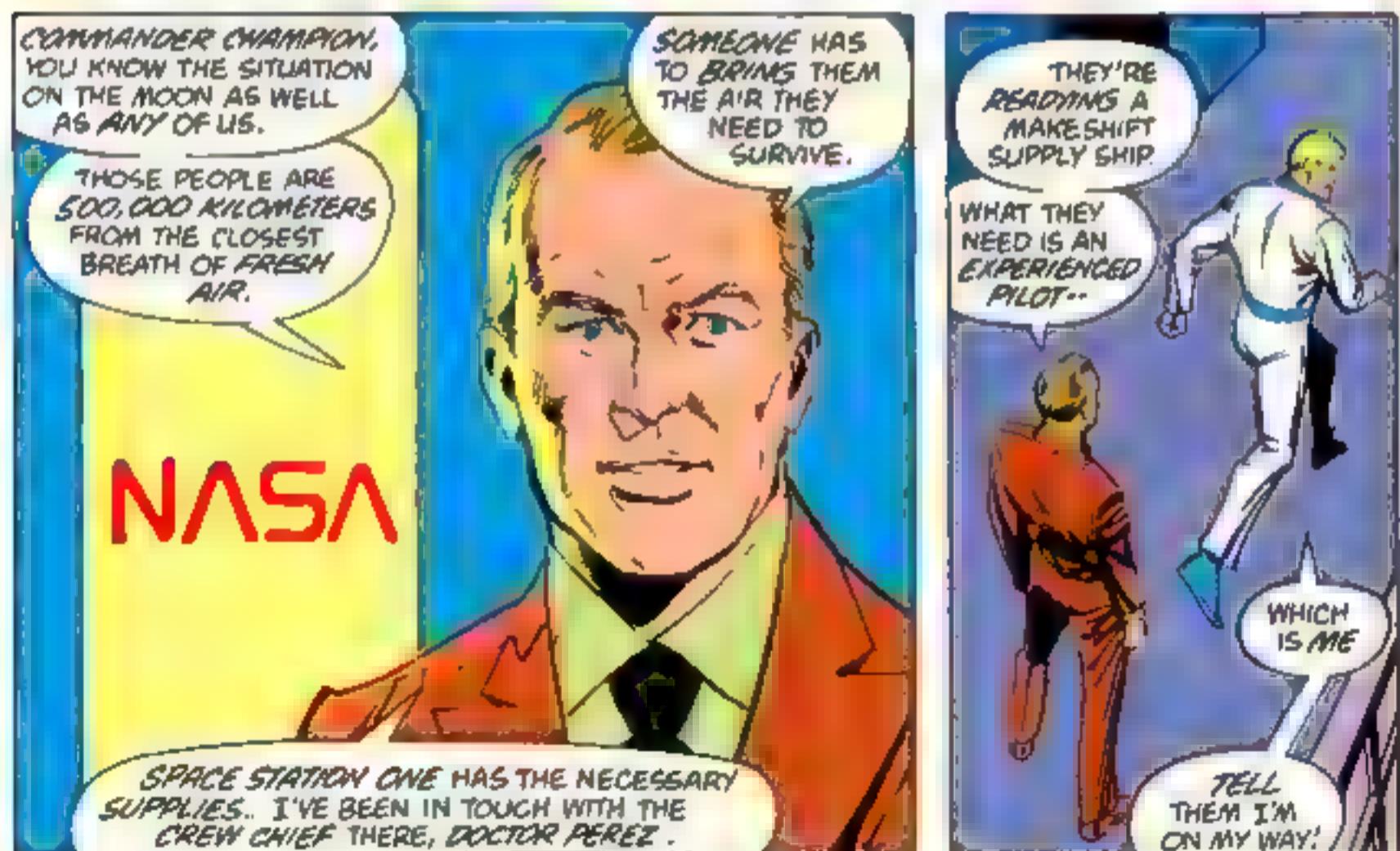
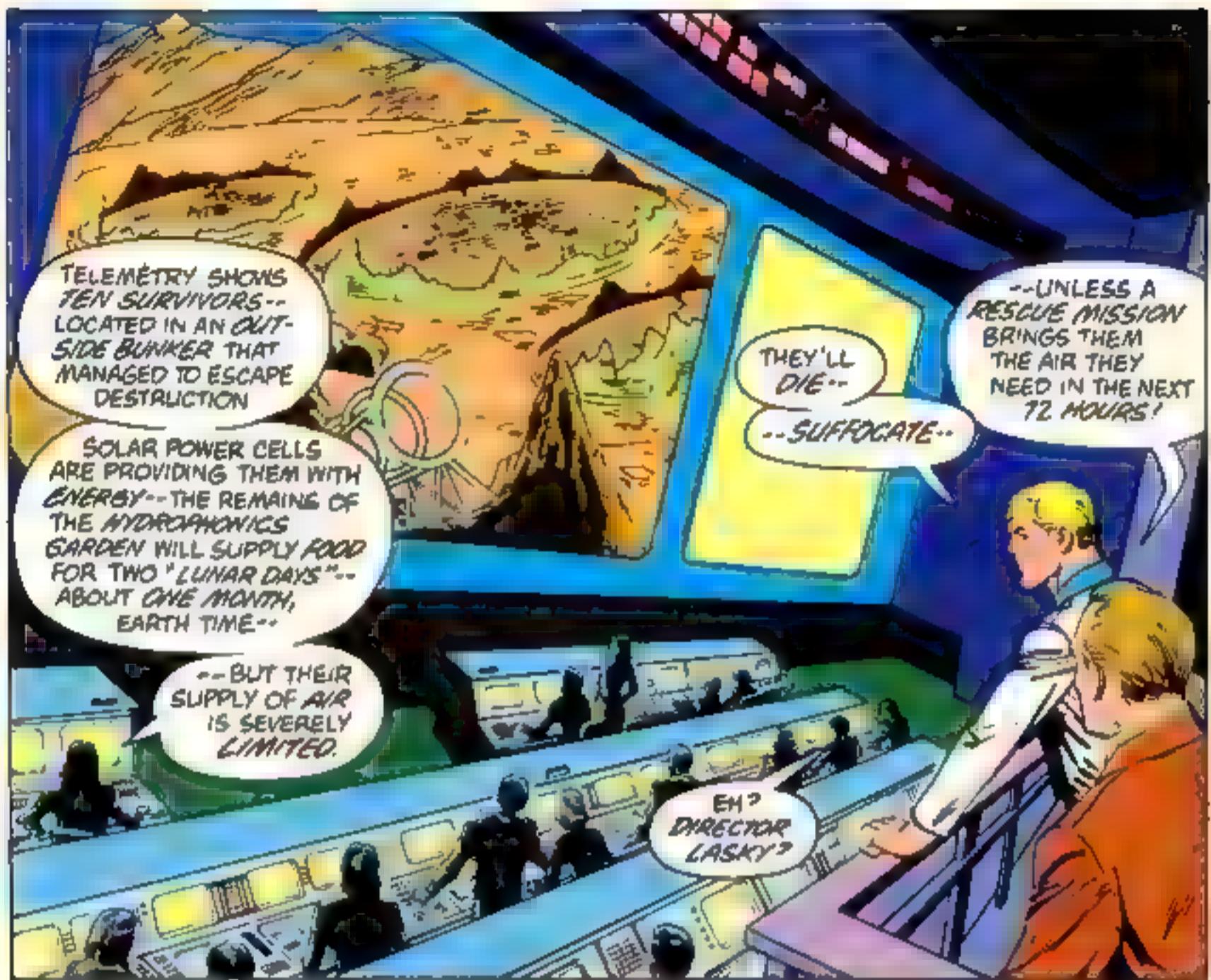


"IN MISSION CONTROL AT CAPE CANAVERAL, GROWN MEN AND WOMEN WEPT AS THE FIRST REPORTS OF THE DISASTER CAME TRICKLING IN."

LUNAR DAMAGE CONTROL REPORTS 75% OF MISSION PERSONNEL LISTED AS FATALITIES.

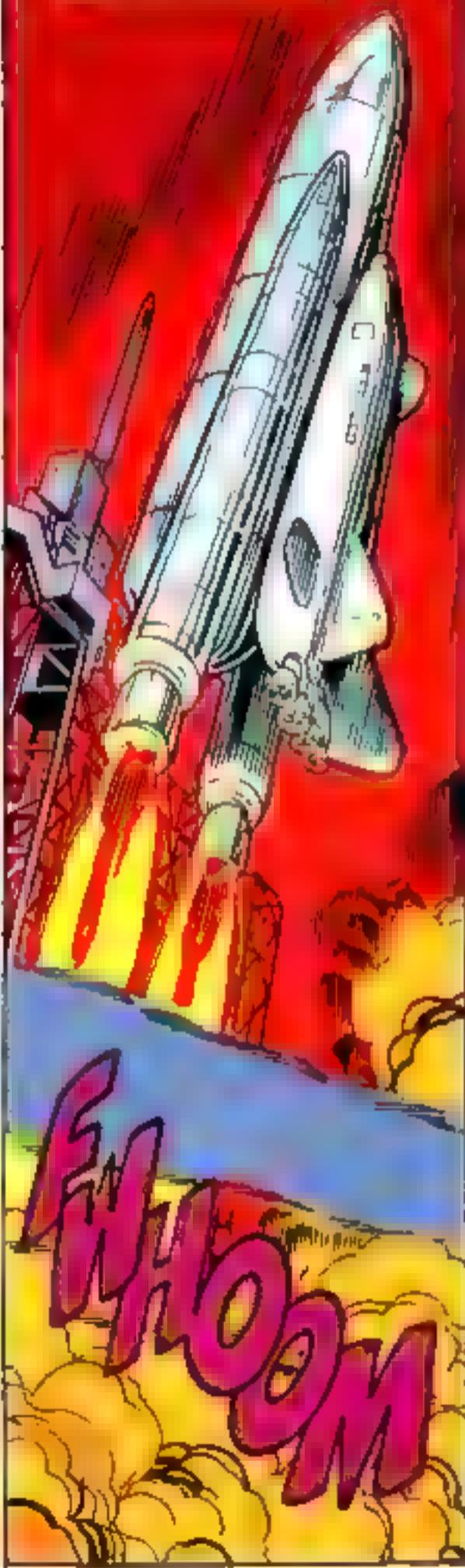
LIFE SUPPORT DOMES 1, 2, AND 3--TOTALLY DESTROYED--!





"'EXPERIENCE' IS RELATIVE
I'D BEEN TO THE MOON FOUR
TIMES SINCE THE U.S. SPACE
PROGRAM STARTED UP AGAIN,
FULL BORE, IN THE MIDDLE 1990S."

"...BUT NOBODY ELSE
HAD COMMANDED A
LUNAR MISSION MORE
THAN TWICE."

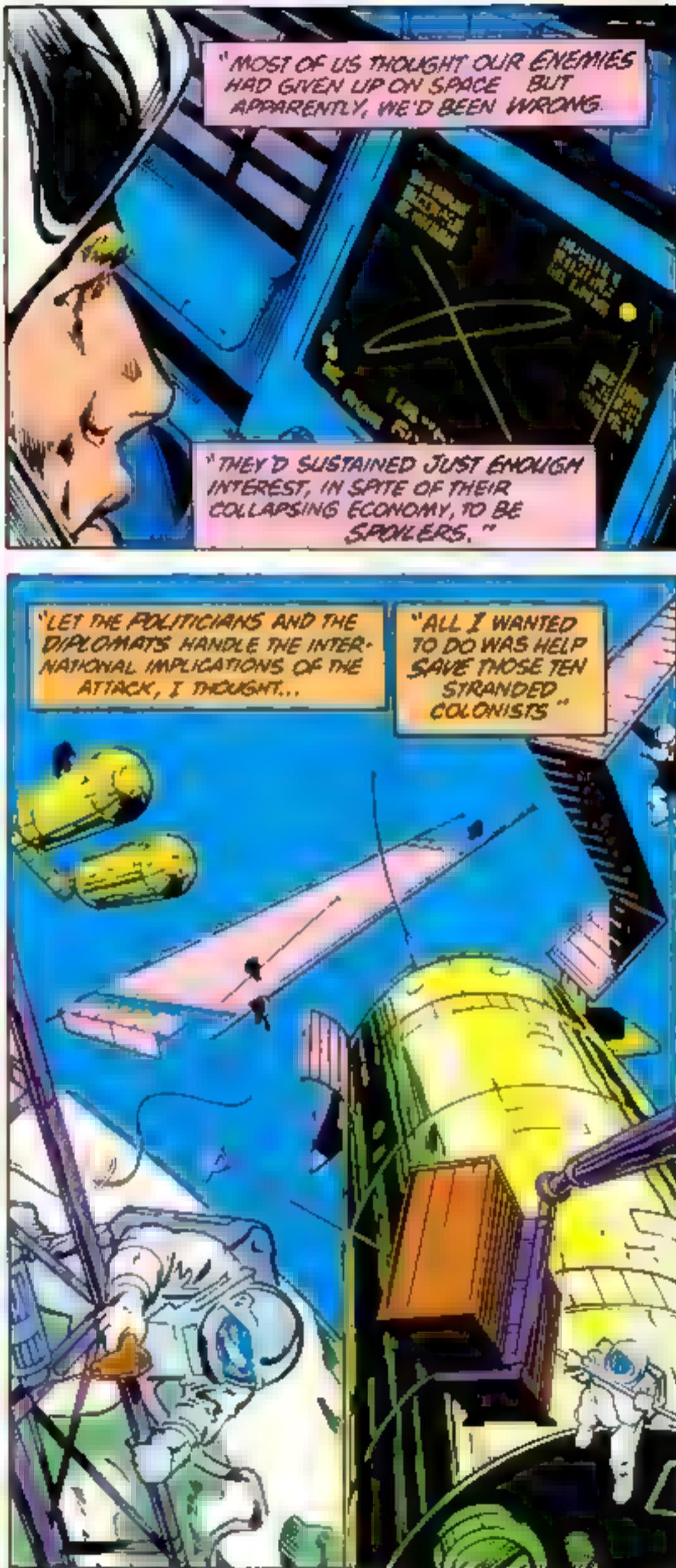


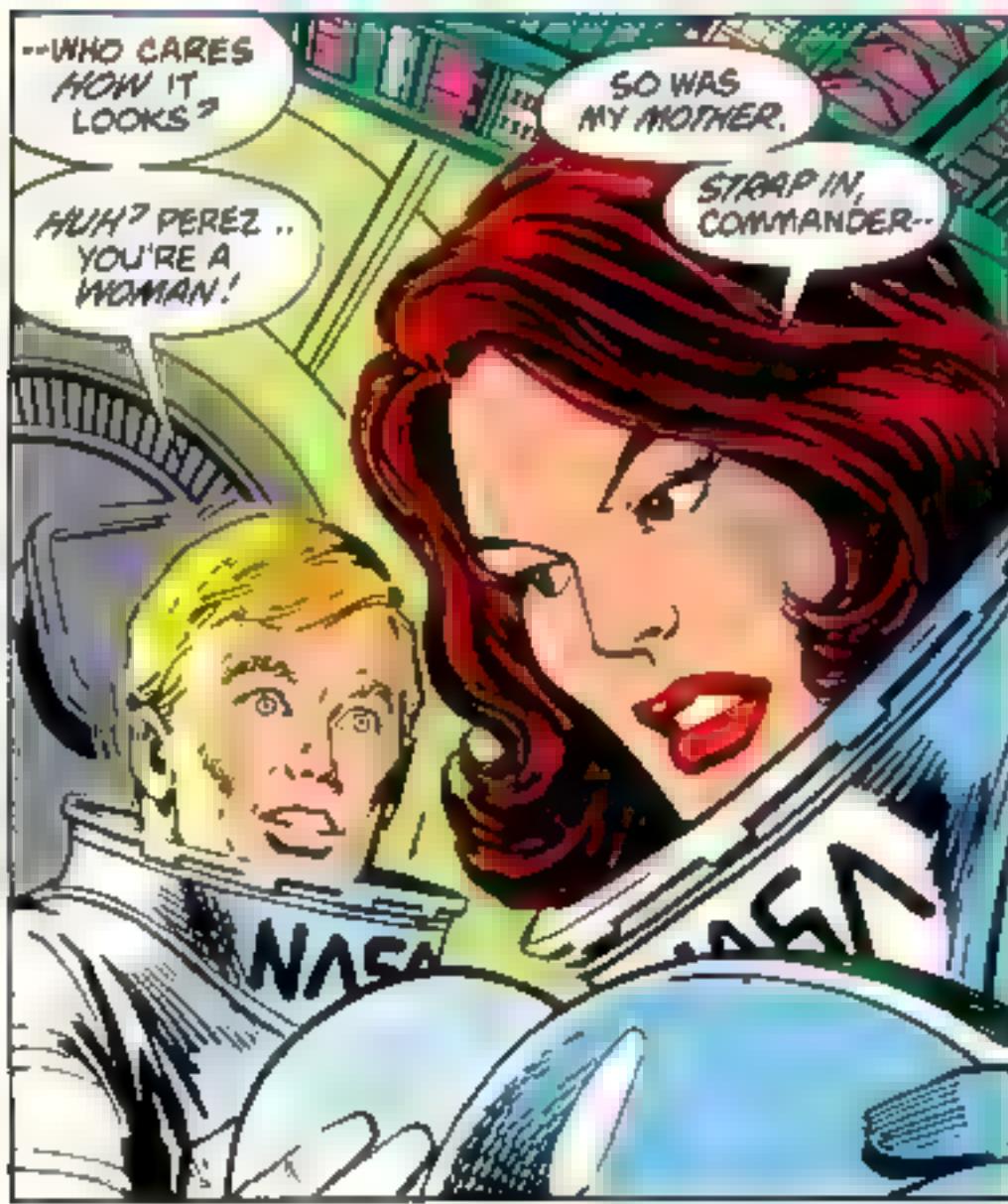
"MOST OF US THOUGHT OUR ENEMIES
HAD GIVEN UP ON SPACE BUT
APPARENTLY, WE'D BEEN WRONG."

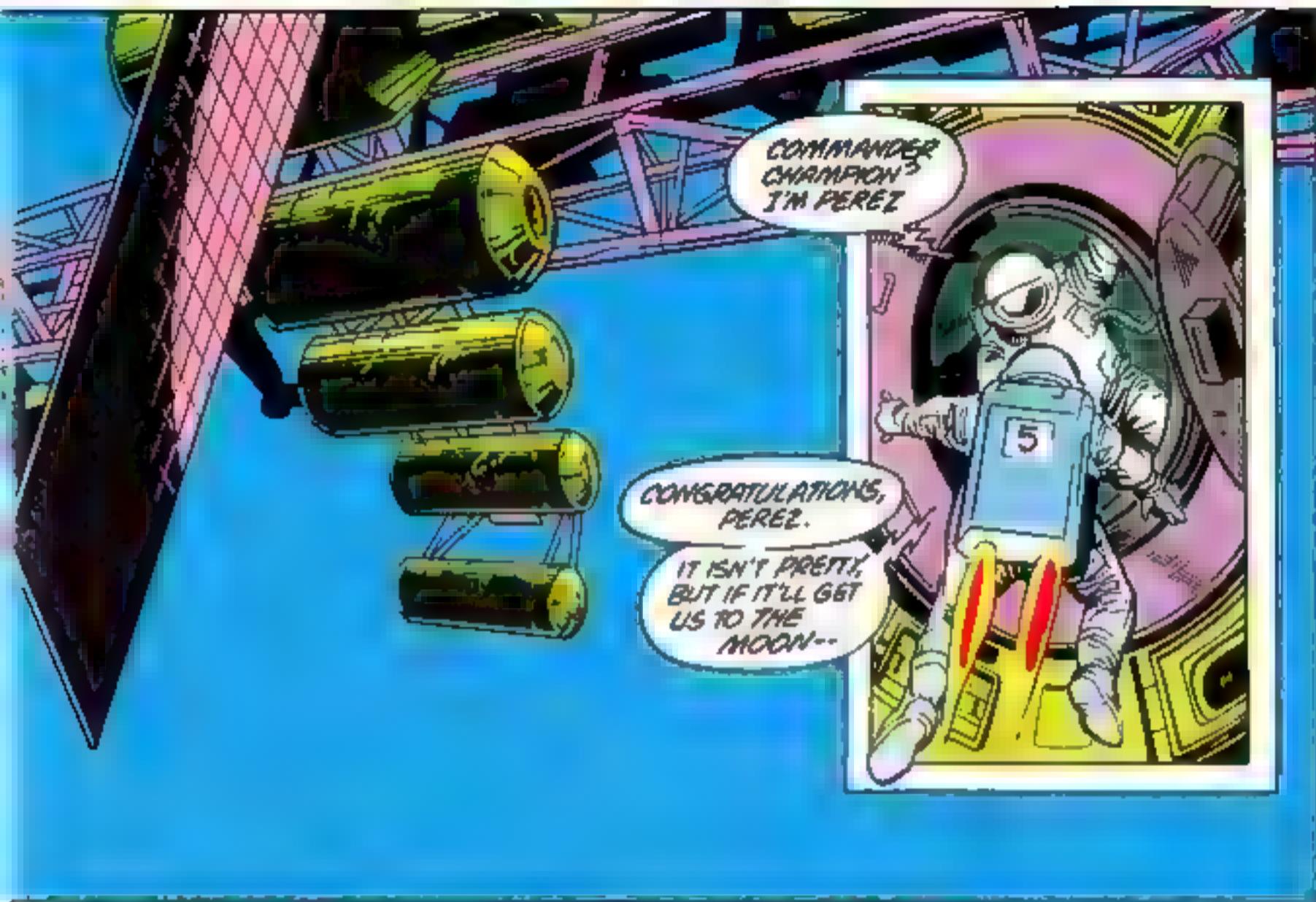
"THEY'D SUSTAINED JUST ENOUGH
INTEREST, IN SPITE OF THEIR
COLLAPSING ECONOMY, TO BE
SPOILERS."

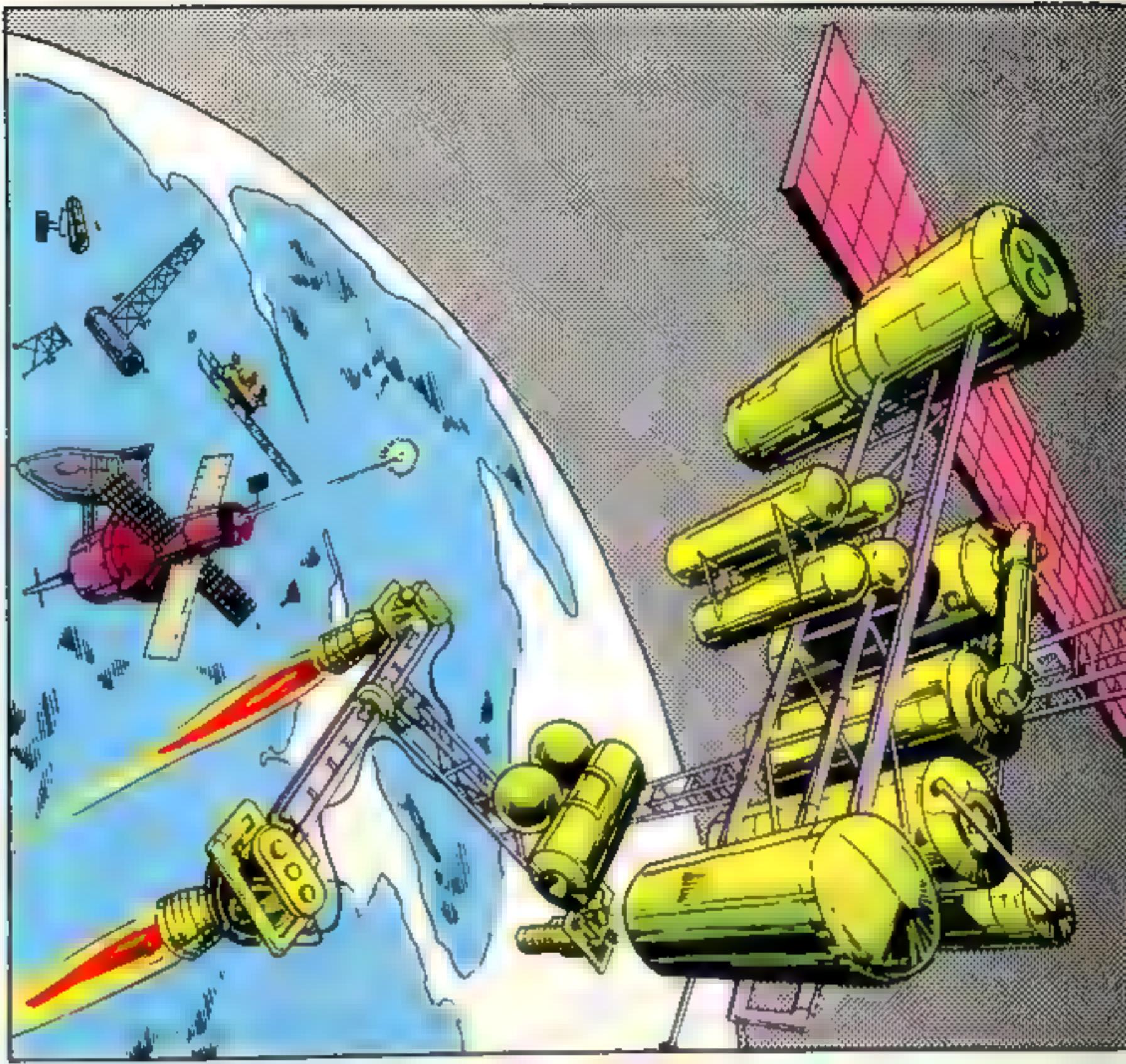
"LET THE POLITICIANS AND THE
DIPLOMATICS HANDLE THE INTER-
NATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE
ATTACK, I THOUGHT..."

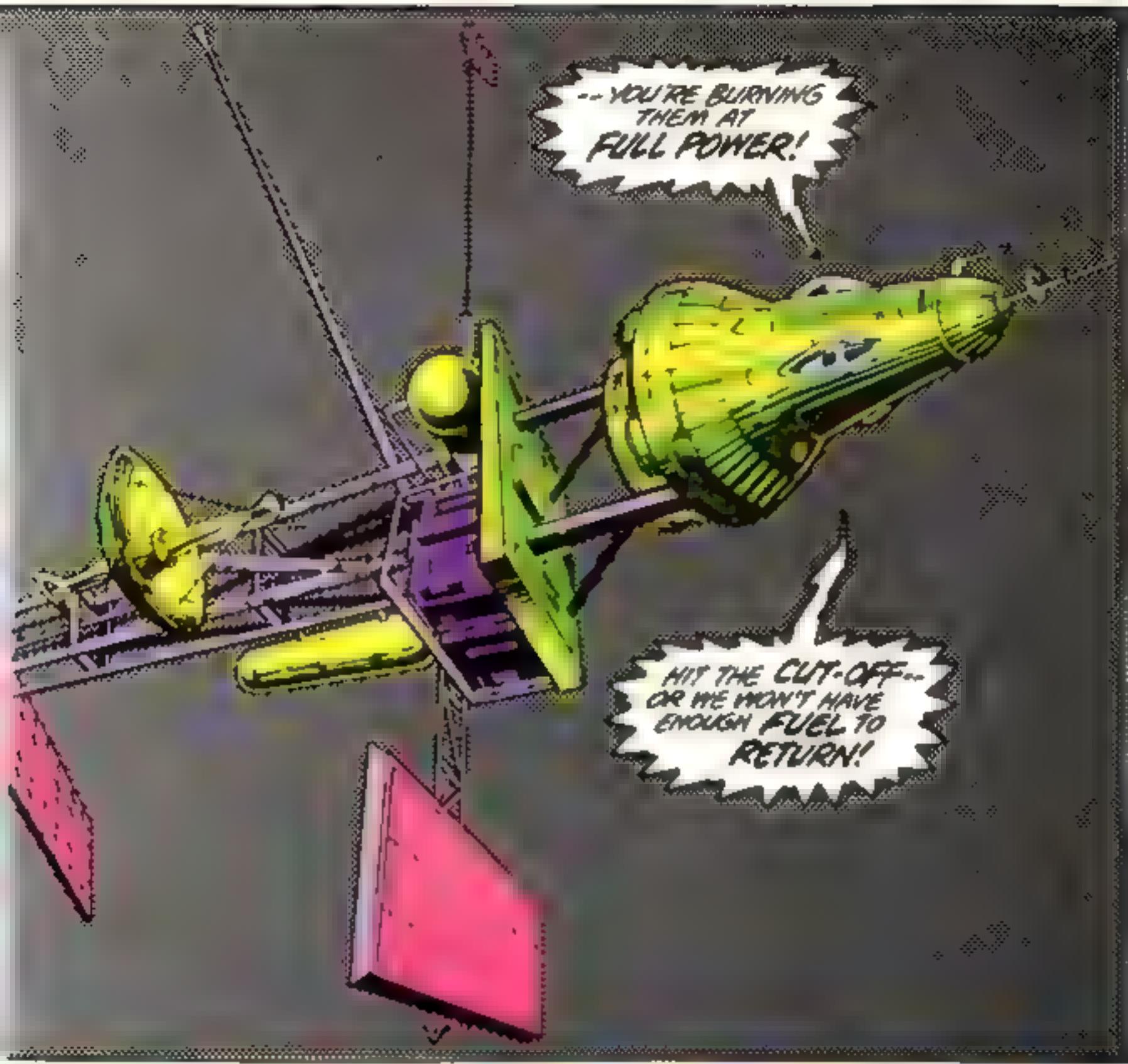
"ALL I WANTED
TO DO WAS HELP
SAVE THOSE TEN
STRANDED
COLONISTS"

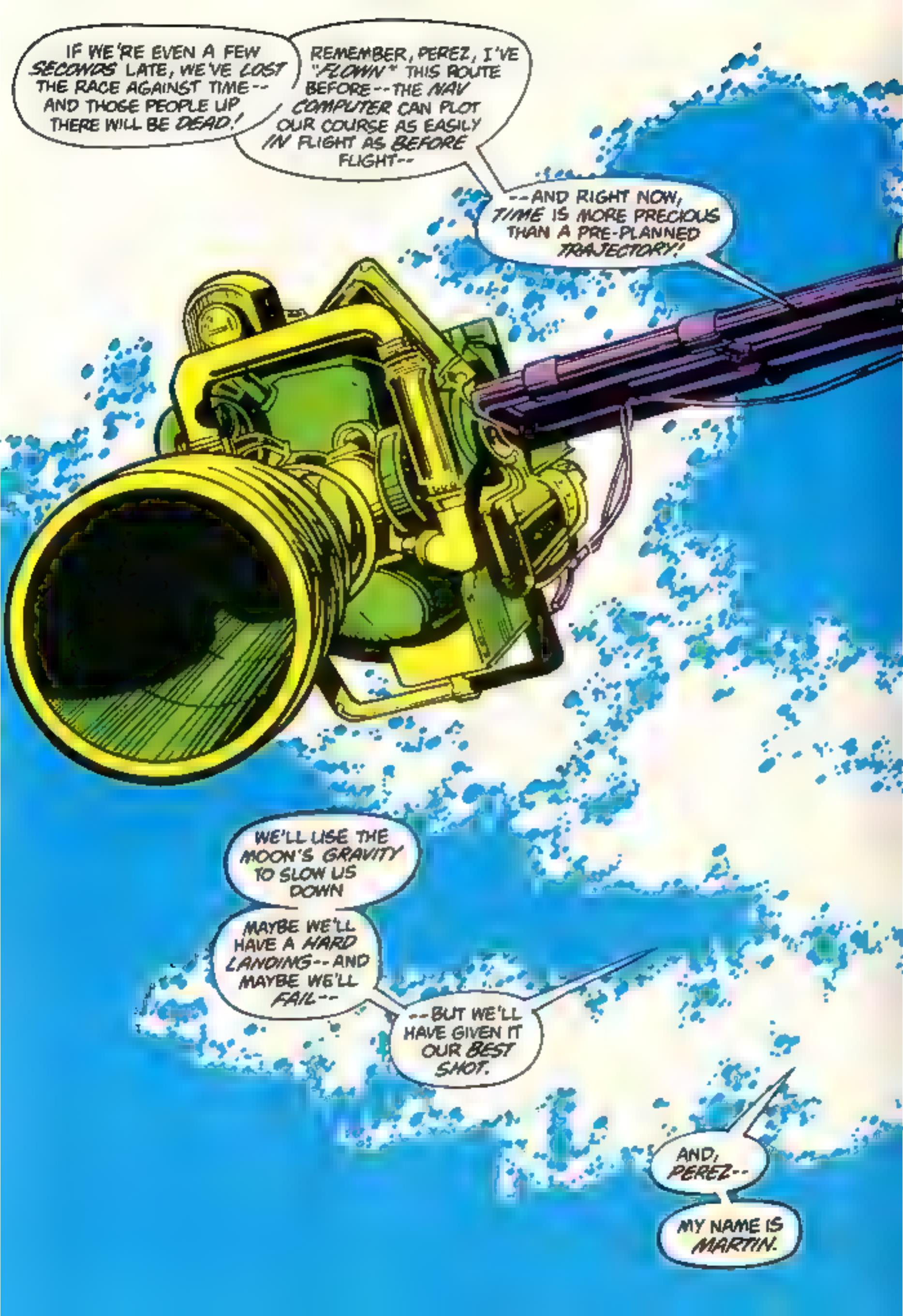












IF WE'RE EVEN A FEW
SECONDS LATE, WE'VE LOST
THE RACE AGAINST TIME--
AND THOSE PEOPLE UP
THERE WILL BE DEAD!

REMEMBER, PEREZ, I'VE
"FLOWN" THIS ROUTE
BEFORE--THE NAV
COMPUTER CAN PLOT
OUR COURSE AS EASILY
IN FLIGHT AS BEFORE
FLIGHT--

--AND RIGHT NOW,
TIME IS MORE PRECIOUS
THAN A PRE-PLANNED
TRAJECTORY!

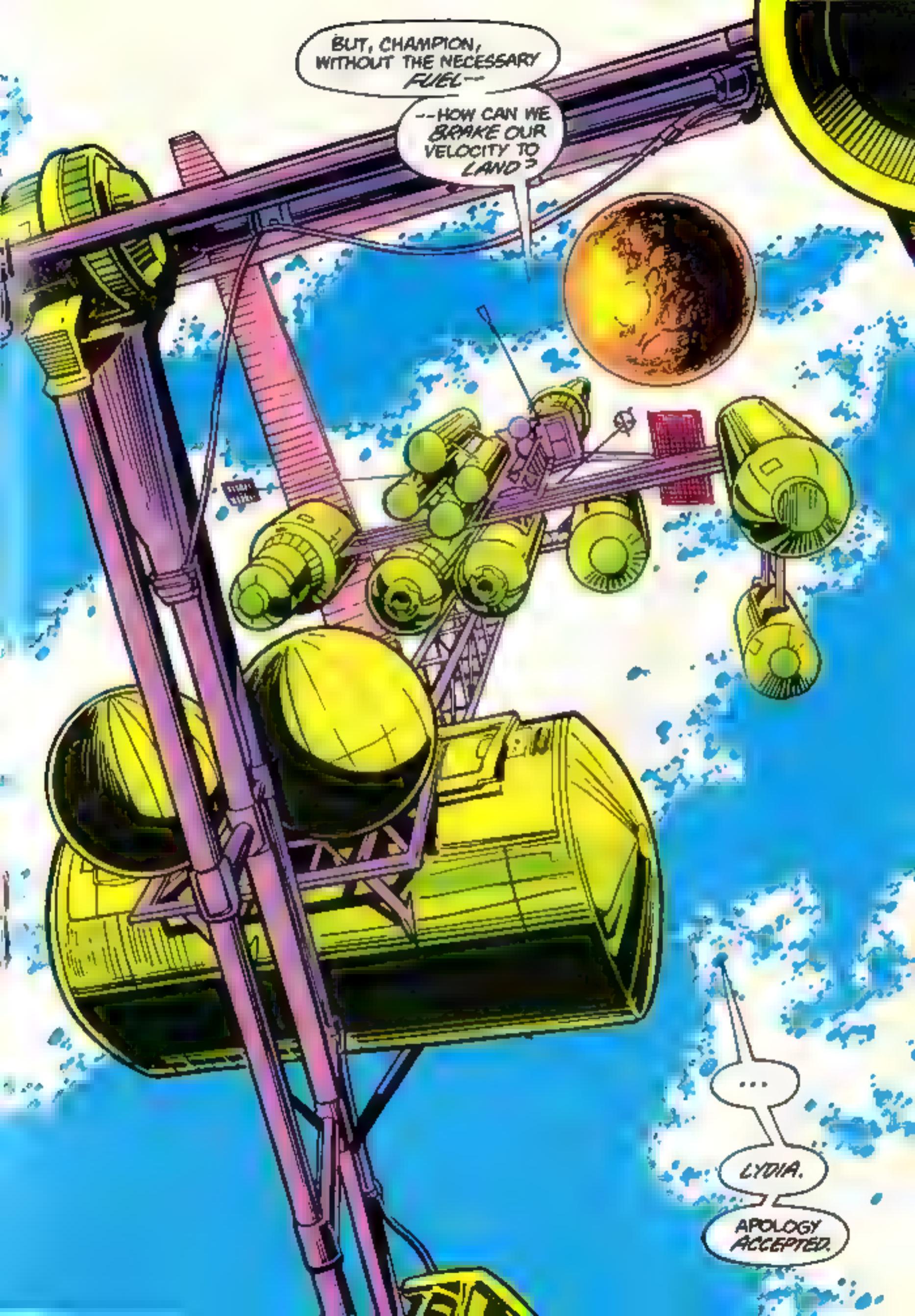
WE'LL USE THE
MOON'S GRAVITY
TO SLOW US
DOWN

MAYBE WE'LL
HAVE A HARD
LANDING--AND
MAYBE WE'LL
FAIL--

--BUT WE'LL
HAVE GIVEN IT
OUR BEST
SHOT.

AND,
PEREZ--

MY NAME IS
MARTIN.



BUT, CHAMPION,
WITHOUT THE NECESSARY
FUEL--

--HOW CAN WE
BRAKE OUR
VELOCITY TO
LAND?

LYDIA.

APOLOGY
ACCEPTED.

"MISSION CONTROL RELAYED REPORTS FROM THE COLONY. THINGS WERE GETTING BAD AS THE AIR TURNED FOUL. FIGHTS BROKE OUT... A MAN WENT SCREAMING MAD FROM CLAUSTROPHOBIA, AND EVERY HOUR THAT PASSED INCREASED THE PRESSURE ON THEM..."



"...AND ON US"





"THEN, ON THE MORNING
OF THE THIRD DAY, WE
LOOKED THROUGH THE
VIEWPORT--

"--AND THERE
IT WAS."

"LUNAR RESCUE
TEAM, THIS IS MISSION
CONTROL. WE'VE JUST
LOST RADIO CONTACT
WITH LUNAR BASE."

"COMPUTER PROJECTIONS
INDICATE--A 95%
PROBABILITY--THAT IT'S
ALL OVER."

"YOUR MISSION
IS SCRUBBED.
STAY IN LUNAR ORBIT
UNTIL A PROPER
RELIEF SHIP CAN--"

NEGATIVE,
MISSION CONTROL

WE DIDN'T COME
THIS FAR TO QUIT
WITHOUT TRYING
FOR A
TOUCHDOWN!

CHAMPION! THIS IS
DIRECTOR LASKY! DON'T BE
A FOOL--RISKING YOUR
LIVES WHEN THERE'S SO
LITTLE HOPE!"

I'M ORDERING
YOU TO--
SKWAARK!"

SO MUCH
FOR MISSION
CONTROL.

WE CAN'T
HEAR THEM
AS WE SWING
AROUND LUNAR
DARKSIDE.

ANY
RESERVATIONS,
PEREZ?

"NONE YOU'RE
PILOTING
THIS JUNKPILE,
CHAMPION

GO FOR IT!"

"--IT WAS TIME
TO BRING THAT
BABY DOWN!"



"ONCE TWICE HALF A DOZEN TIMES, WE CIRCLED THE MOON, AND WITH EACH ORBIT WE DROPPED LOWER, SLOWING OUR DESCENT WITH A COMBINATION OF GRAVITY AND DYING RETRO-ROCKETS..

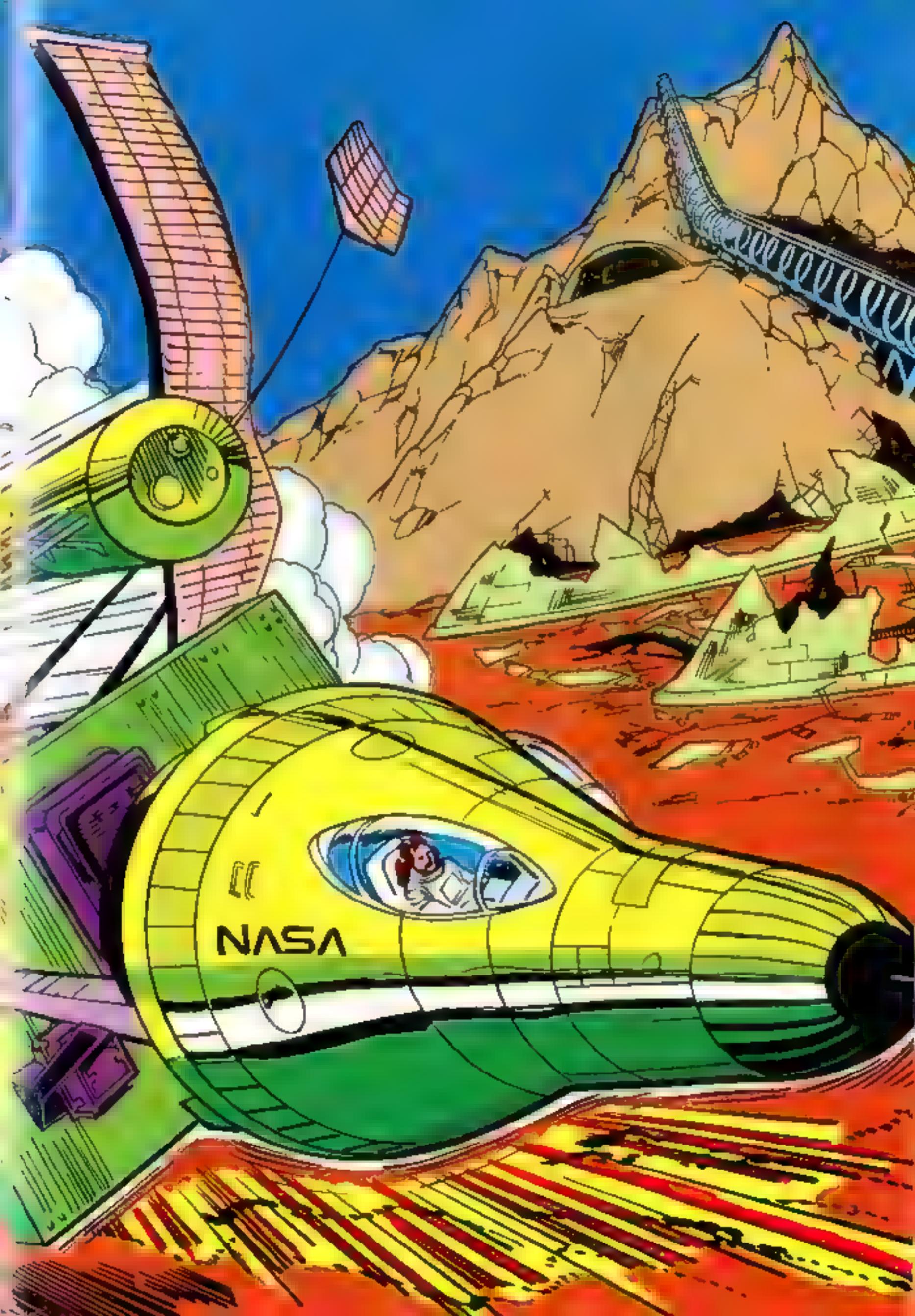
"FINALLY, WE WERE TOO LOW TO MAKE ANOTHER ORBIT.. AND, LIKE IT OR NOT--"





"I DON'T THINK
MY HEART STOPPED--

--BUT IT SURE
AS HELL MISSED
A BEAT!"



CHAMPION, YOU'RE CERTIFIABLE--BUT YOU'RE ALSO ONE NECK OF A PILOT

PEREZ, AS A HERO OF MINE ONCE SAID--

"THIS MAY BE THE START OF A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP"

ONCE I GET LOOSE OF THESE STRAPS, I'M GOING TO KISS YOU

AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT AT THE TIME.

A FEW DAYS LATER-- WHILE WE WERE WAITING WITH THE LUNAR COLONISTS FOR A RESCUE SHIP TO ARRIVE-- THE WAR STARTED.

NASA MANAGED TO PROVE WHICH OF OUR ENEMIES TRIED TO WIPE OUT THAT MOON BASE-- --AND THAT LED TO A WORLD-WIDE SHOOT-OUT!

THE EARTH LYDIA AND I CAME HOME TO WASN'T THE SAME ONE WE'D LEFT.

WE LOST TRACK OF EACH OTHER AFTERWARD, DURING THE BREAK-UP.. AND LIKE SOME OTHERS, WE BOTH ENDED UP WORKING FOR THE ATARI INSTITUTE, WHEN THINGS FINALLY SETTLED DOWN.

IT'S BEEN SEVEN YEARS SINCE I LAST SAW HER... WHY WAS SHE SO COLD?

CHAPTER THREE

FINAL APPROACH

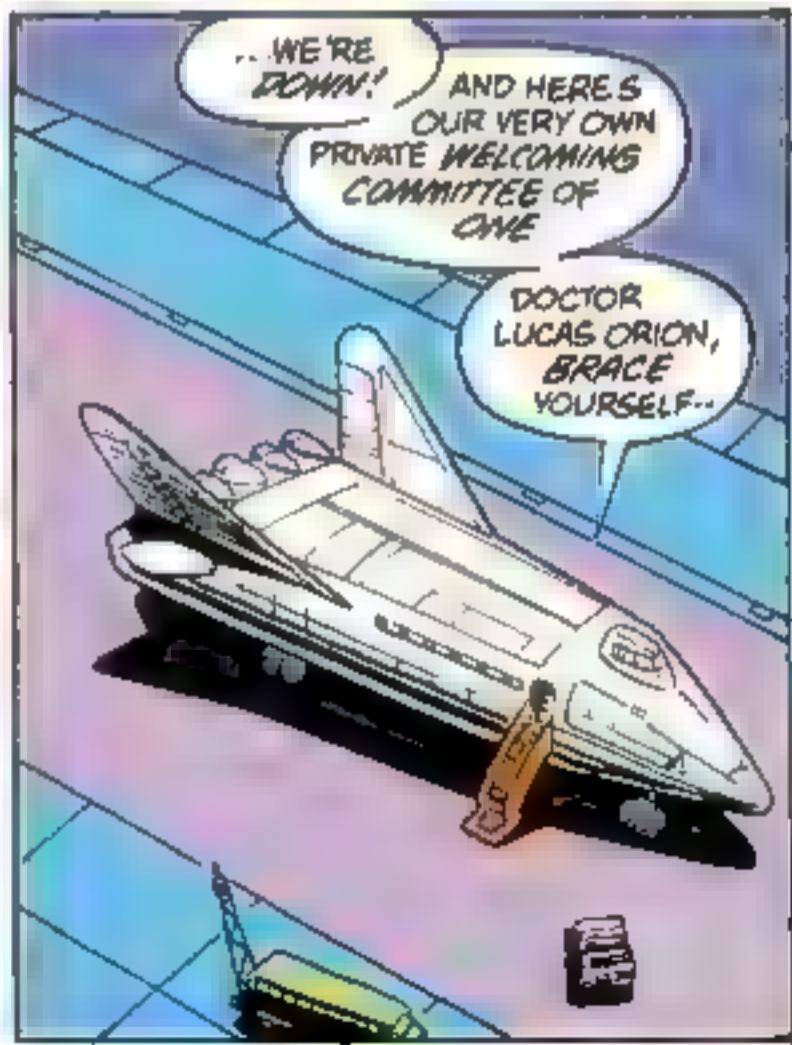
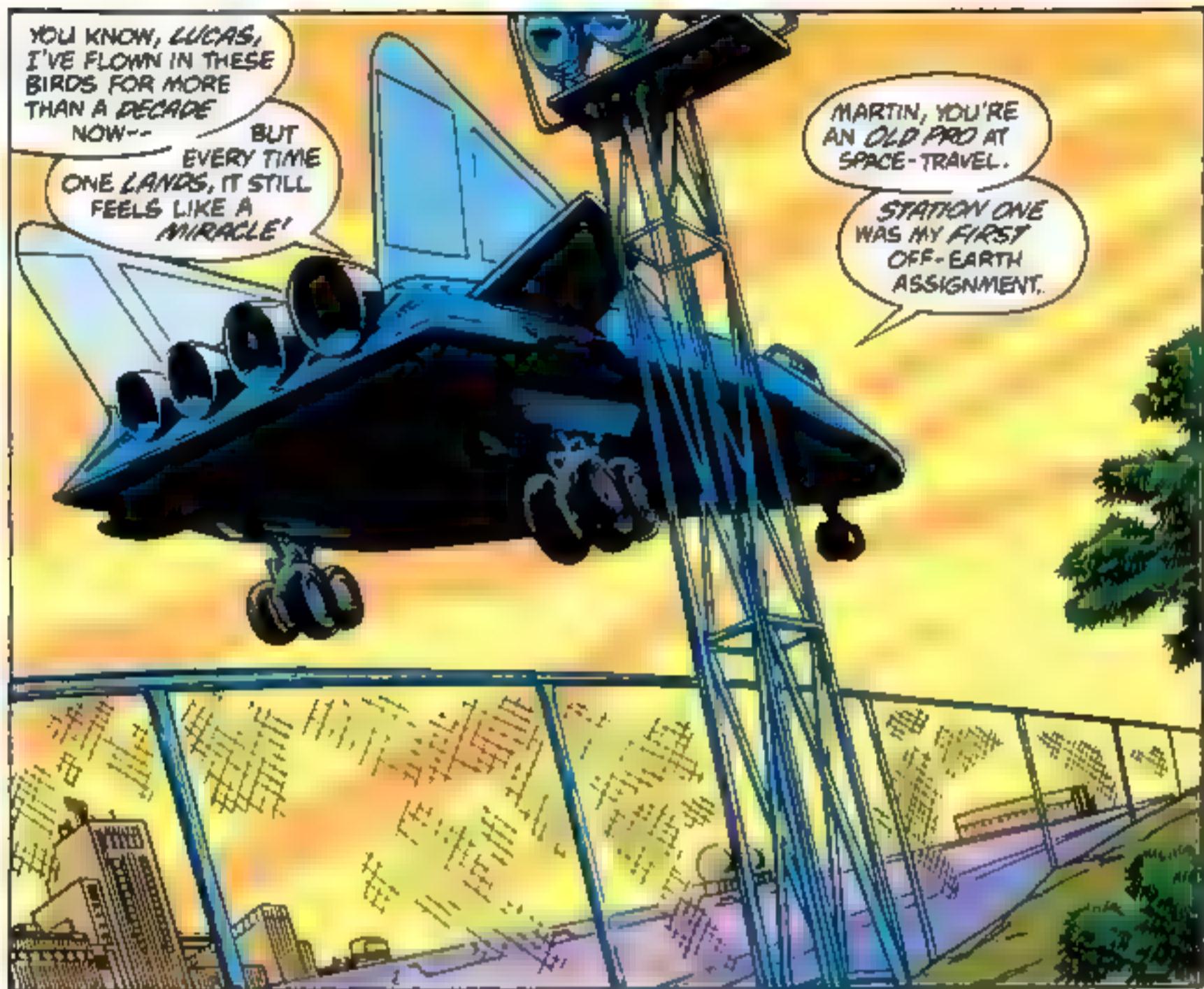
"ATARI CONTROL,
WE'RE IN THE
GLIDE PATH."

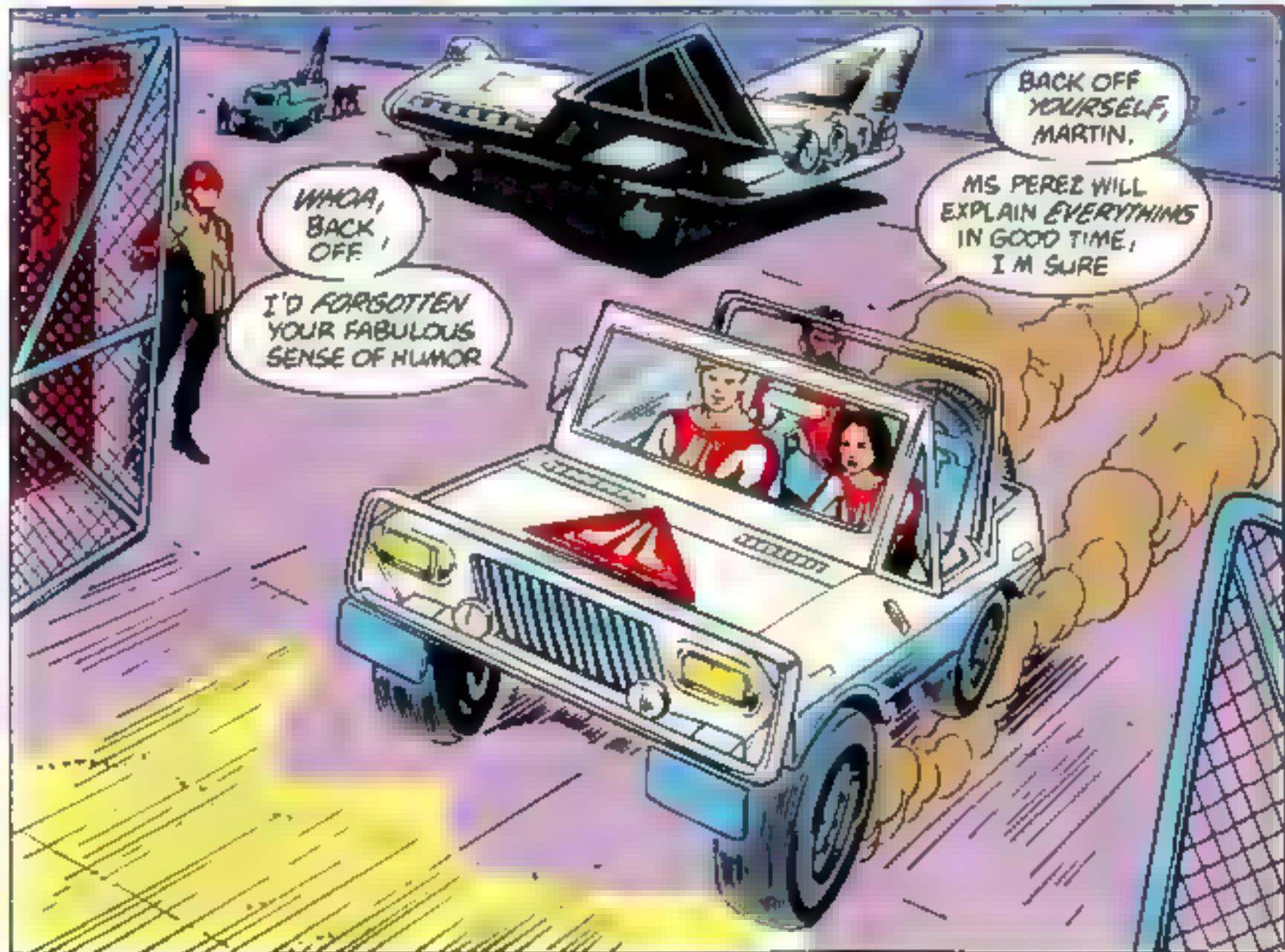
"ESTIMATED
TOUCHDOWN AT
2202.00:00."

"ROGER,
SHUTTLE EIGHT
YOU'RE RIGHT
ON THE BUTTON."

"INFORM YOUR PASSENGERS
THAT ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
PEREZ WILL BE ON THE PAD
WITH A TRANSPORT VEHICLE
WHEN THEY DEBARK."

"ATARI
CONTROL--
OUT!"







IT'S NOT MY
PLACE TO
EXPLAIN,
DOCTOR.

THAT'S UP TO THE
DIRECTOR--HE'S BEEN IN
COMMAND OF PROJECT:
MULTIVERSE FROM THE
BEGINNING. I WAS ONLY
BROUGHT IN ON THE DESIGN
END SIX MONTHS AGO.

BUT I CAN TELL YOU
THIS. SINCE THE WAR, WE'VE
SEARCHED FOR A SOLUTION
TO THE WORLD FOOD
SHORTAGE...

...AND WITH PROJECT
MULTIVERSE, WE MAY HAVE
FOUND THE SOLUTION TO
THAT, AND A WHOLE HOST
OF OTHER POTENTIAL
DISASTERS!

LUCAS ORION LISTENS WITH ONLY HALF-ATTENTION. THE MENTION OF THE WAR, AND THE SIGHT OF THE RUNNERS WHO JOG HOMEWARD ALONG THIS ABANDONED STRETCH OF HIGHWAY, HAVE STIRRED MEMORIES HE THOUGHT WERE DEEPLY BURIED.

...MEMORIES OF A DAY SIX YEARS IN THE PAST, DURING THE DARK MONTHS OF THE BREAK-UP, THAT PROLONGED PERIOD OF WORLD-WIDE CHAOS WHICH FOLLOWED ON THE HEELS OF THE WAR...

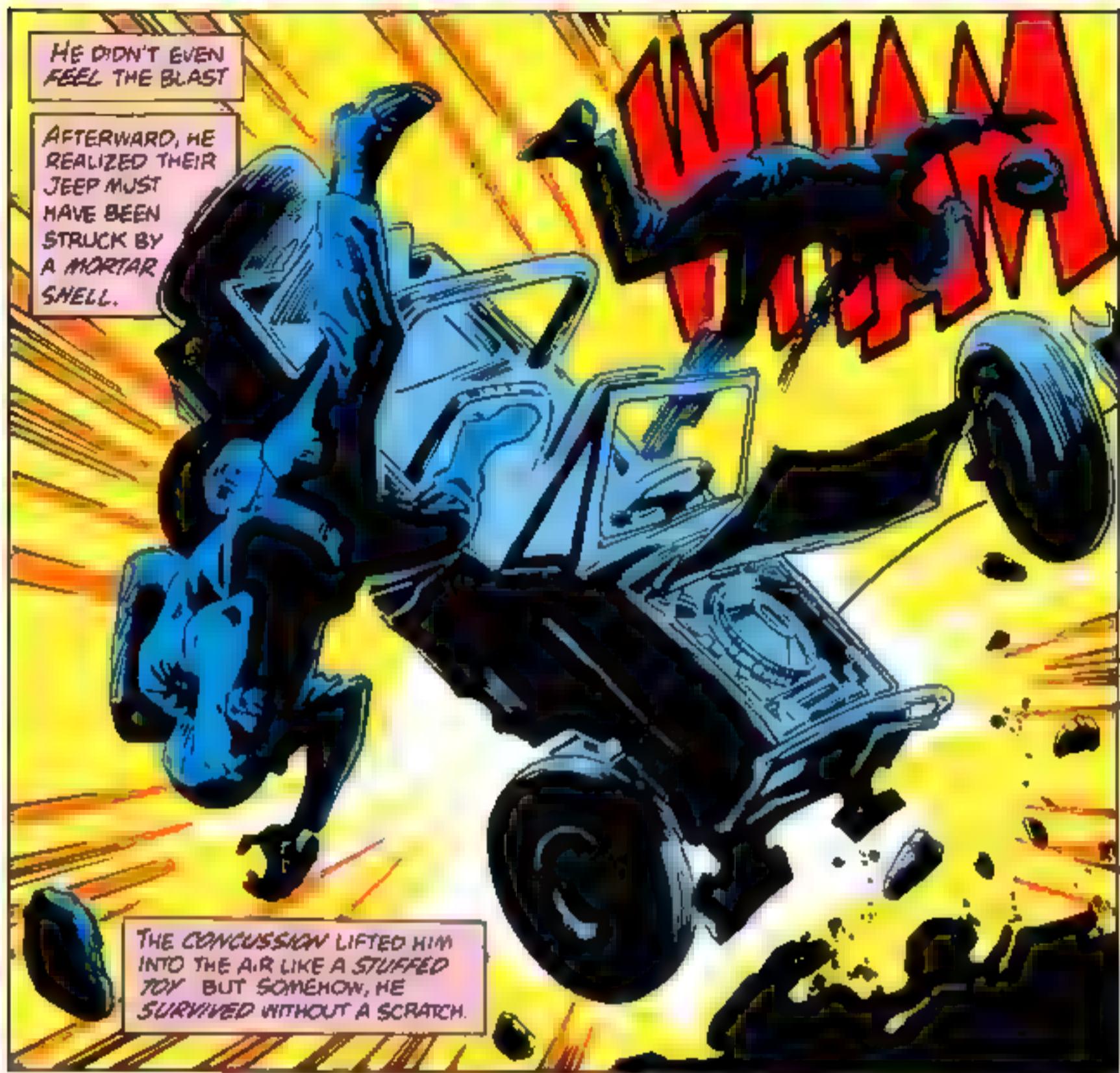


RUNNING FIGURES!

THE RUNNERS OF HIS MEMORY WERE REFUGEES, FLEEING A BLOODY CIVIL WAR IN THE HEART OF A ONCE-STABLE AFRICAN STATE.

LUCAS ORION WAS A MEDIC ATTACHED TO A UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE. THE LAST SUCH "PEACE-KEEPING" FORCE THAT DYING ORGANIZATION WAS EVER TO SPONSOR.





AND HE REALIZED THAT THERE WERE OTHERS IN THE WORLD WHOSE HORRORS WERE GREATER THAN HIS OWN.

THAT CHILD...

WAAA

WAAA



-- SHE IS IN THE PATH OF THE BOMBARDMENT!

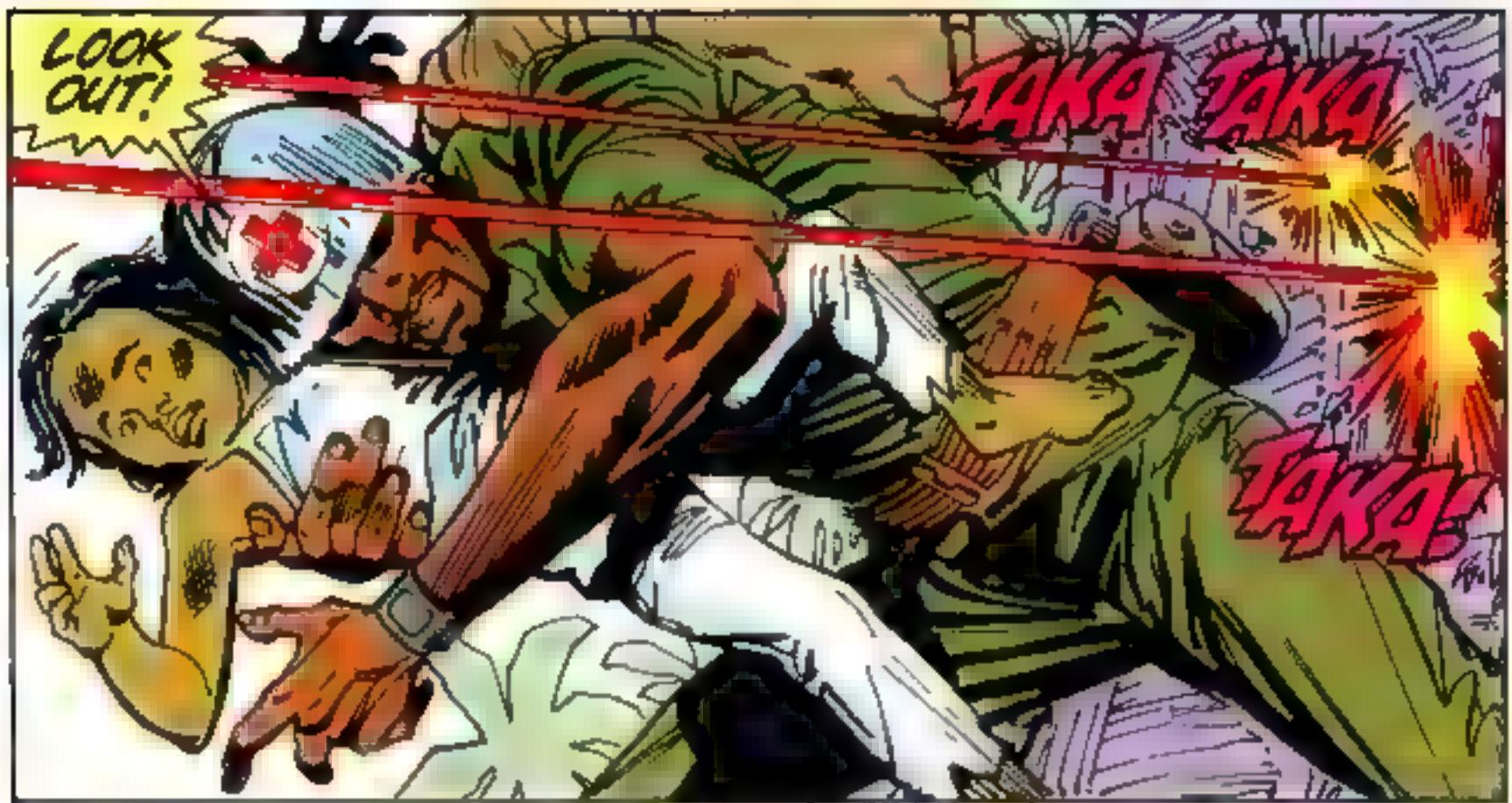
HAVE TO GET HER AWAY!

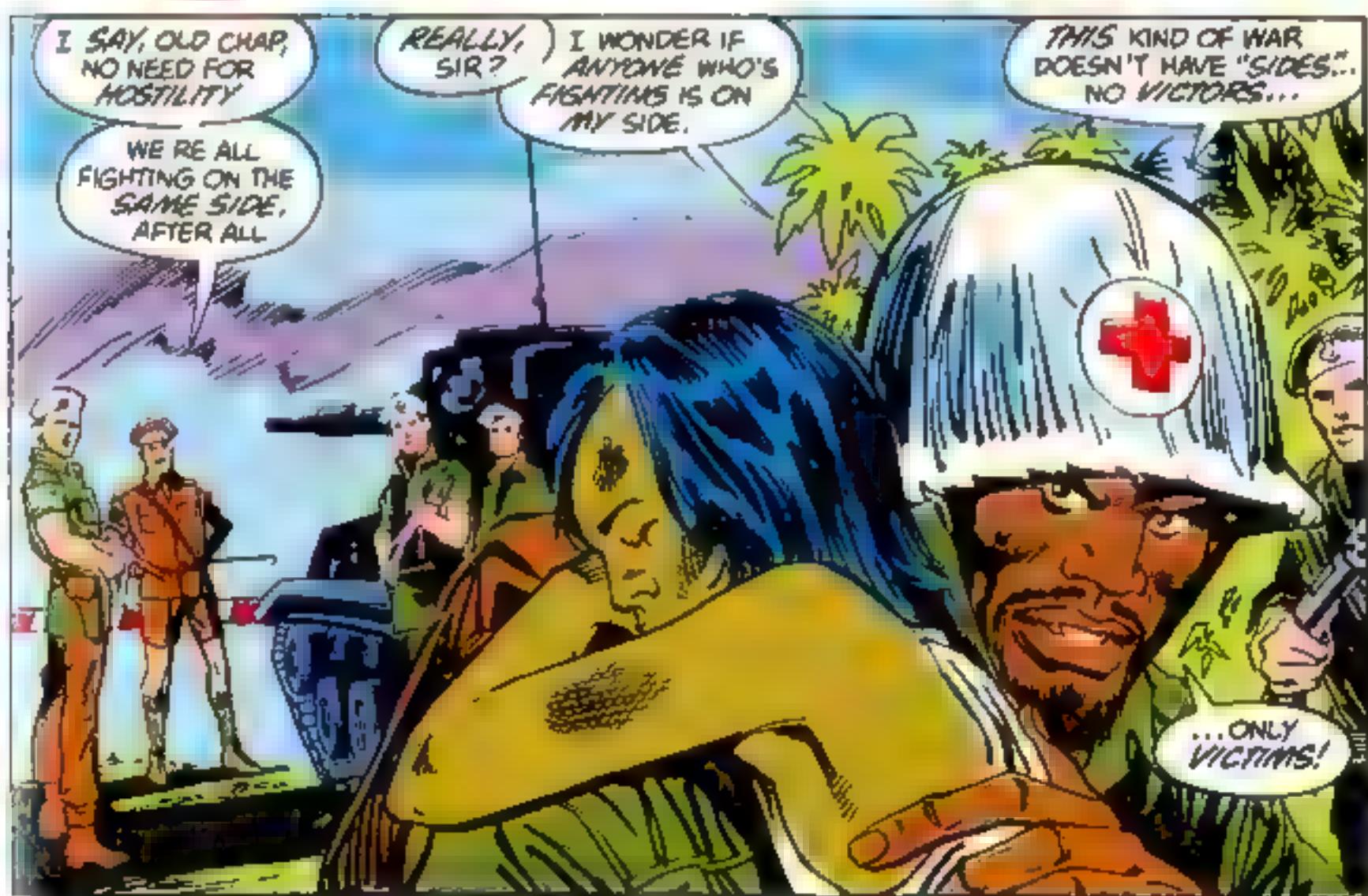
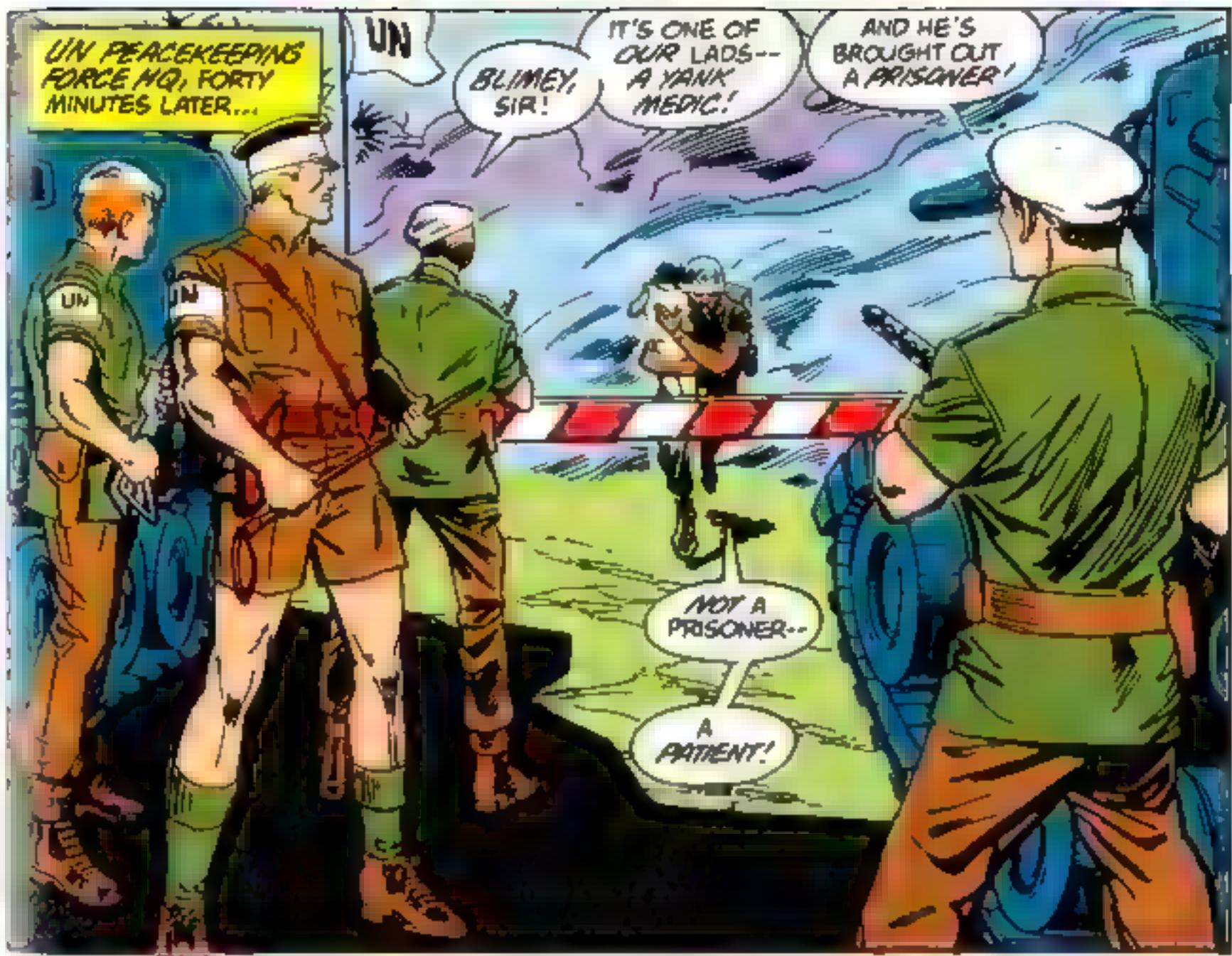
SHELLS WHISTLED AROUND HIM -- FLYING DIRT BLINDED HIM -- BUT THE GIRL'S CRIES DREW HIM ON ...

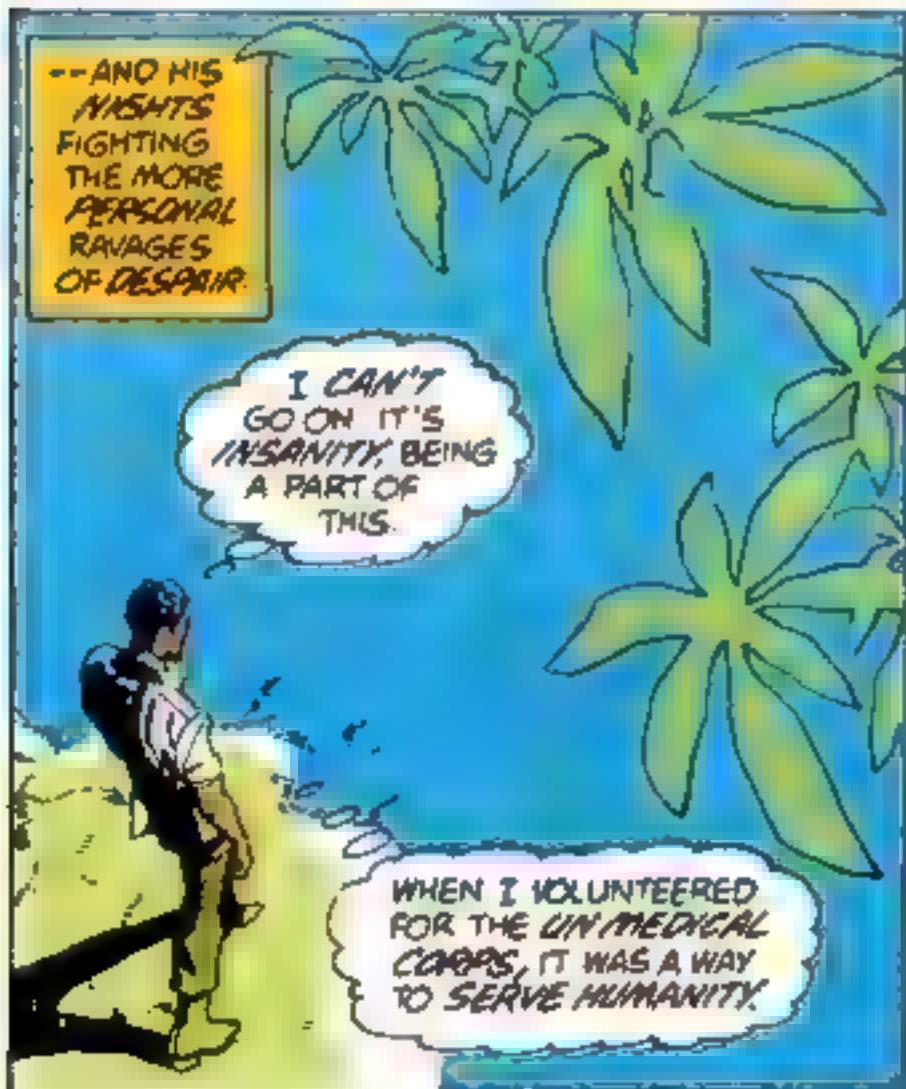
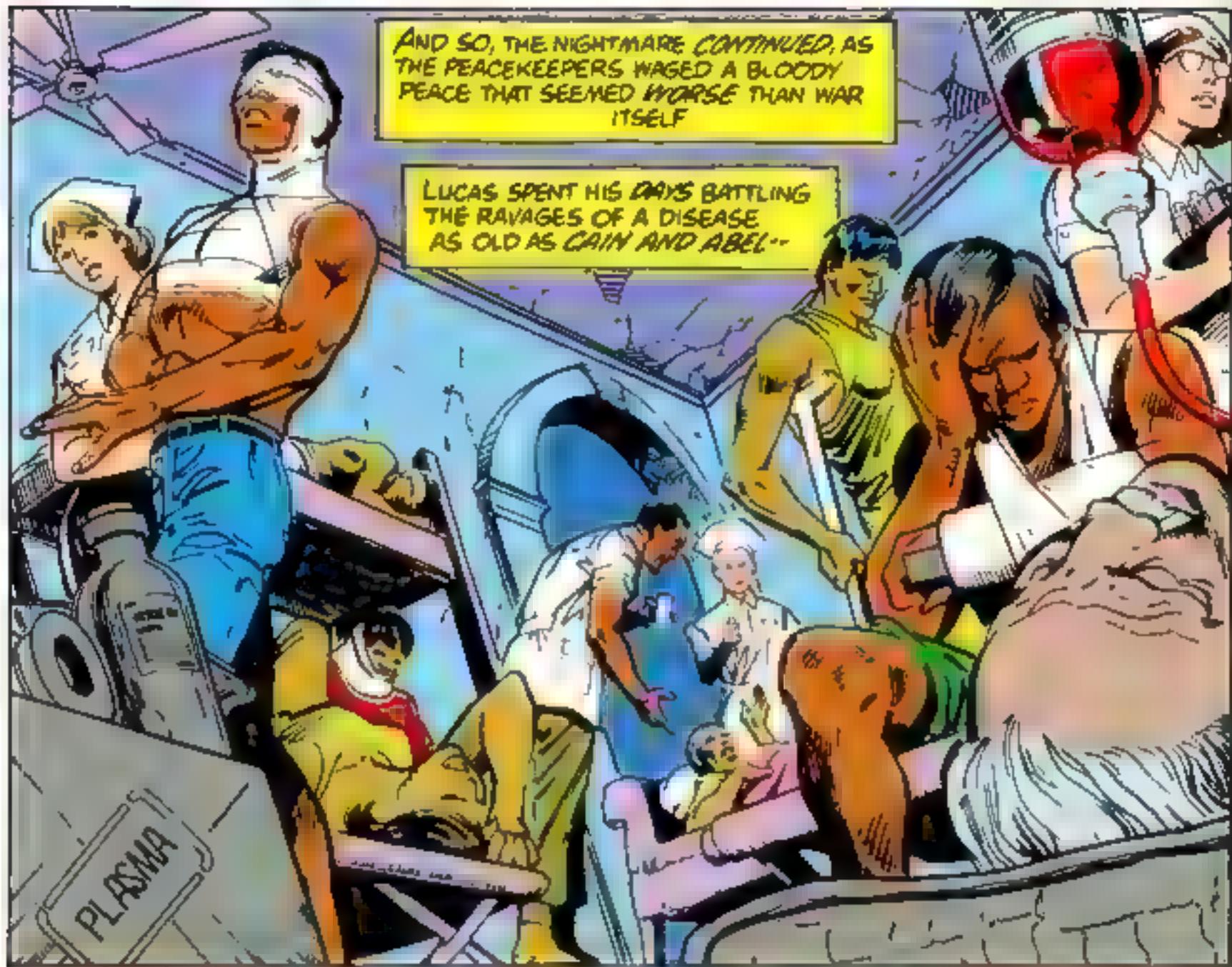
BEHIND HIM, LUCAS COULD HEAR ENEMY TROOPS CLOSING IN ON THE WASTED TOWN.

MACHINE GUNS CHATTERED HUNGRILY IN THE DUSK, NEARER, NEARER ..









PERHAPS IT'S FATE
THAT THIS CAME
TODAY.

A NEW BEGINNING
...NEW HOPES,
NEW DREAMS..

UNITED NATIONS
SPECIAL COMMUNIQUE

TO DR. LUCAS ORION
UN. FORCE X320

FROM ATARI
INSTITUTE
SUNNYVALE, CA.

DEAR DR. ORION
BECAUSE OF EXPANDED RESPONSIBILITIES
DUE TO THE BREAK-UP OF TRADITIONAL
POLITICAL NATION-STATES, ATARI INSTITUTE
IS ASSUMING CONTROL OF NASA AND THE
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE. STOP YOUR
OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC RECORD LEADS
US TO OFFER YOU A POSITION AS
MEDICAL RESEARCH

PERHAPS EVEN
A NEW FUTURE FOR
ALL HUMANKIND.

AND THAT'S
WHAT I WANT,
ISN'T IT?

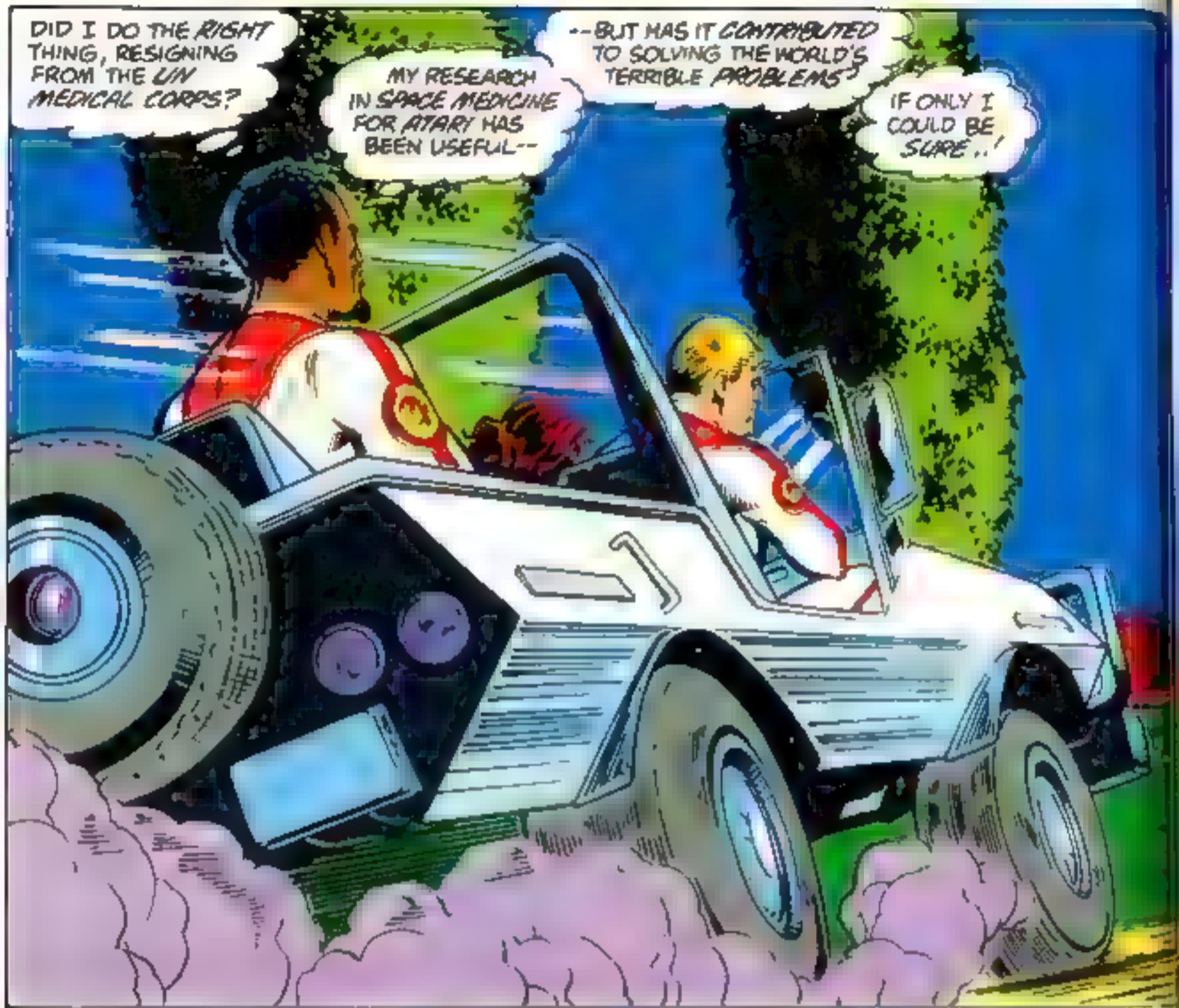
ISN'T
IT.?

ATARI
INSTITUTE
WANTS TO MAKE
ME THEIR
DIRECTOR OF
MEDICAL
RESEARCH.

I COULD
LEAVE ALL
THIS BEHIND.

THE STARS HAD
NO ANSWER FOR
LUCAS ORION,
THAT NIGHT..

AND NOW, SIX
YEARS LATER,
THEY ARE AS
CRYPTIC AS
EVER.



THERE SHE IS, LUCAS! ATARI INSTITUTE!

REDUCE SPEED
YOU ARE NOW ENTERING
ATARI COMPLEX

NOW THAT WE'RE SO CLOSE TO HOME, PEREZ.

--WORLDS WITH A DIFFERENT HISTORY THAN OUR OWN EARTH?

BUT THAT'S JUST A FANTASTIC THEORY!

IT'S SCIENCE FICTION!





--BUT IT'S CLEAR THE LADS IN SECURITY HAVEN'T A NOTION THAT ANYTHING'S WRONG!

AYE, THIS SENSOR-DETECTOR TELLS THE TALE--

--AND WHAT A HOEFUL TALE 'TIS!

A MERE SLIP OF A GIRL HAS PENETRATED THE TIGHTEST SECURITY SYSTEM IN ALL NORTHCAL, LAYING BARE ITS GREATEST SECRET FOR THE PLUNDERING--

--AND NOT A MAN OR WOMAN IN THE ENTIRE ATARI COMPLEX EVEN SUSPECTS I'M HERE!



TO BE CONTINUED

SEE ATARI'S "BERZERK!" GAME CARTRIDGE FOR THE STARTLING CONCLUSION OF
"ATARI FORCE... THE ORIGIN!"



**THE EXCITEMENT
IS JUST
BEGINNING!
DC AND ATARI
PROUDLY PRESENT
THE FURTHER EPIC
ADVENTURES OF**

ATARI FORCE

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AVAILABLE ONLY
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CARTRIDGES FOR ATARI'S
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